

38 YEARS

MICHAEL TARM
Associated Press

JOLIET, Illinois (AP) — A swaggering Chicago-area police officer whose sensational story inspired a TV movie starring Rob Lowe was sentenced to 38 years in prison on Thursday for murdering his wife.



Former police sergeant Drew Peterson was sentenced to 38 years in prison for the 2004 murder of his third wife Kathleen Savio, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, in Joliet, Ill.

(AP Photo/M. Green)

Peterson, 59, had divorced Kathleen Savio, his third wife, a year before her 2004 death at age 40. His motive for killing her, prosecutors said, was fear that a pending settlement would wipe him out financially.

Fascination with Peterson arose from speculation he sought to use his law enforcement expertise to get away with murder.

Peterson is also a suspect in the disappearance of Stacy Peterson, his fourth wife who was 23 years old when she vanished in 2007, but he hasn't been charged in her case. It was her disappearance that led authorities to take another look at Savio's death and eventually reclassify it from an accident to a homicide.

Continued on Page 5

THUNDERSNOW



Winter storm blankets Great Plains, heads east

A Lawrence Firefighter prepares to extinguish a vehicle fire in Lawrence, Kan., Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013. The car caught on fire trying to make it up a snow covered hill on Lawrence Avenue.

(AP Photo/Orlin Wagner)

JIM SALTER
Associated Press

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Blinding snow, at times accompanied by thunder and lightning, bombarded much of the nation's midsection Thursday, causing white-out conditions, shutting down large swaths of interstate highways and forcing schools, businesses and

even state legislatures to close. Kansas was the epicenter of the winter storm, with parts of the state buried under 14 inches of powdery snow, but winter storm warnings stretched from eastern Colorado through Illinois. Freezing rain and sleet were forecast for southern Missouri, southern Illinois and Arkan-

sas. St. Louis received all of the above — a treacherous mix of snow, sleet and freezing rain. Several accidents were blamed on icy and slushy roadways, including two fatal accidents. Most schools in Kansas and Missouri, and many in neighboring states, were closed. Legislatures shut down in

Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Nebraska and Iowa.

"Thundersnow" rumbled through Kansas and Missouri earlier Thursday. National Weather Service meteorologist Scott Truett said that's the result of an unstable air mass, much like a thunderstorm.

Continued on Page 2

Russian officials back off murder charge in death

DAVID M. HERSZENHORN
© 2013 New York Times

MOSCOW—Russian officials retreated from allegations of murder against a Texas woman whose 3-year-old adopted son from Russia died in late January, as U.S. investigators said the cause of the boy's death remained unclear.

Russia late last year banned adoptions by U.S. citizens, and news of the death of the boy in Texas, Max Shatto, has provoked an outcry here, including demands for the return of his younger brother, Kristopher, 2, who was adopted by the same parents.

On Tuesday, Russia's prosecutorial investigative committee announced that it had opened an investigation into the "murder" of the boy, and the federal commissioner for children's rights, Pavel Astakhov, issued a statement declaring: "Urgent! In the state of Texas, an adoptive mother killed a 3-year-old Russian child." Andrei Turchak, the governor of the region where the boys were born as Maxim and Kirill Kuzmina, told the Interfax news agency that "a savage crime" had been committed. But in subsequent interviews, Astakhov backed off, focusing instead on negligence by the mother, Laura Shatto, who said that the boys had been playing outside and that she had left them unattended. She later found Max lying on the ground unresponsive. He died Jan. 21 at a hospital. "Even if she is not found guilty of murder, she will face negligence charges," Astakhov told the Rossiya-24 television channel. Sheriff Mark Donaldson of Ector County, Texas, whose office is investigating the boy's death, said that officials were still waiting for autopsy results and that neither Shatto nor anyone else was suspected of a crime. "We need a determination on whether they rule it a homicide, or if they rule it accidental, or if they rule it undetermined," he said in an interview. □

Winter storm blankets Great Plains, heads east

Continued from front

"Instead of pouring rain, it's pouring snow," Truett said. And pouring was a sound description, with snow falling at a rate of 2 inches per hour or more in some spots.

Accuweather said that by the time the storm dies out, at least 24 states will be affected.

Snow totals on Thursday passed the foot mark in many places: Monarch Pass, Colo., had 17½ inch-

"If you don't have to get out, just really, please, don't do it," Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback said.

Travelers filled hotels rather than skating across dangerous roadways. At the Econo Lodge in WaKe-

"I kind of enjoyed it this time," he said. "We were certainly needing the moisture terribly."

The storm brought some relief to a region of the country that has been parched for nearly a year, engulfed



A trucker stops in almost whiteout conditions along K-10 highway near Eudora, Kan., Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013.

(AP Photo/Orlin Wagner)

Topeka got 3 inches of snow in one 30-minute period, leaving medical center worker Jennifer Carlock to dread the drive home.

"It came on fast," Carlock said as she shoveled around her car. "We're going to test out traction control on the way home."

Alex Sosnowski, a meteorologist for Accuweather, said the storm will push off into the Great Lakes and central Appalachians, and freezing rain could make it as far east and south as North Carolina. He also said a "spin-off" storm was expected to create heavy snow in New England on Saturday, and could push Boston to a February record.

es, Hutchinson, Kan., 14 inches and Wichita, Kan., 13 inches. A few places in far northern Oklahoma saw between 10 to 13½ inches of snow.

The National Weather Service said up to 18 inches of snow were possible in central Kansas.

With that in mind, Kansas transportation officials — and even the governor — urged people to simply stay home.

Drivers were particularly warned away from the Kansas Turnpike, which had whiteout conditions. Interstate 70 was also snow-packed and a 90-mile stretch of that road was closed between Salina and Hays.

ney, Kan., assistant manager Michael Tidball said the 48-room hotel was full. But there were a few that came down with cabin fever, like Jennifer McCoy of Wichita. She loaded her nine children — ages 6 months to 16 years — in a van for lunch at Applebee's.

"I was going crazy, they were so whiny," McCoy said. They planned to build an igloo after lunch.

Just south of Wichita near the small community of Clearwater, Scott Van Alen had already shoveled the sidewalks and was on his tractor clearing the driveway of the 10 inches of snow. For once, he didn't mind the task.

in the worst drought in decades. Climatologists say 12 inches of snow is equivalent to about 1 inch of rain, depending on the density of the snow.

Vance Ehmke, a wheat farmer near Healy, Kan., said the nearly foot of snow was "what we have been praying for."

"The big question is, 'Is the drought broke?' " Ehmke asked.

Near Edwardsville, Ill., farmer Mike Campbell called the snow — or any precipitation — a blessing after a bone-dry growing season in 2012. He hopes it is a good omen for the spring.

"The corn was just a disaster," Campbell said of 2012. □

Obama hosting new Japan PM at White House

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama is welcoming Japan's new prime minister to the White House. The two leaders will meet in the Oval Office Friday to reinforce their longstand-

ing alliance at a time of high tension stoked by a Japan-China territorial dispute and a North Korean nuclear test.

Shinzo Abe is a nationalist and a keen advocate of stronger relations with

Washington that remain key to U.S. policy in Asia but haven't been helped by the rotating door of Japanese prime ministers. Abe is the fifth since Obama took office.

The U.S. will be gauging

Tokyo intent to join a trans-Pacific trade pact and will be encouraging Japan to patch up its differences with Beijing that threaten to spark a conflict a region critical to the global economy. □

Police:

Hotel altercation sparked Las Vegas gun battle

KEN RITTER

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — The Las Vegas Strip became a scene of deadly violence early Thursday when someone in a black Range Rover opened fire on a Maserati, sending it crashing into a taxi that burst into flames, leaving three people dead and at least six injured.

Police believe an altercation earlier at an unspecified casino resort prompted the car-to-car attack in the heart of the Strip at Las Vegas Boulevard and Flamingo Road.

The crossroads is the site of several major hotel-casinos, including Bellagio, Caesars Palace and Bally's.

"This doesn't happen where we come from, not on this scale," said Mark Thompson, who was visiting from Manchester, England, with his wife. "We get stabbings, and gang violence, but this is like something out of a movie. Like 'Die Hard' or something."

Police said they were contacting authorities in three neighboring states about the Range Rover Sport with dark tinted windows, distinctive black custom rims and paper dealer ads in place of license plates that fled the scene about 4:20 a.m.

In Southern California, the California Highway Patrol alerted officers in at least three counties to be on the lookout for the SUV.

Las Vegas Police Sgt. John Sheahan said the Range Rover was last seen near the Venetian resort as it headed north from the shooting scene on Las Vegas Boulevard.

Witnesses also told police the sports utility vehicle and Maserati had come from the nearby CityCenter area, just south of the site of the attack.

"We have numerous witnesses to this," Sheahan said. "But what is the genesis of this? We don't know yet."

Police also have video from traffic cameras at

the intersection and were checking hotel surveillance systems. The video will not be made public, Sheahan said.

Police said the Maserati hit the taxi cab, which went up in flames, and the driver and passenger were killed. The male driver of the Maserati also died, and his passenger was shot.

The crumpled, gray sports

car, which had no license plates, came to rest several feet (only meters) away from the incinerated taxi.

"The people I feel sorry for are the people in the taxi," said Elvina Joyce, a tourist from Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. "Seconds made all the difference in the world for them. Wrong place, wrong time."

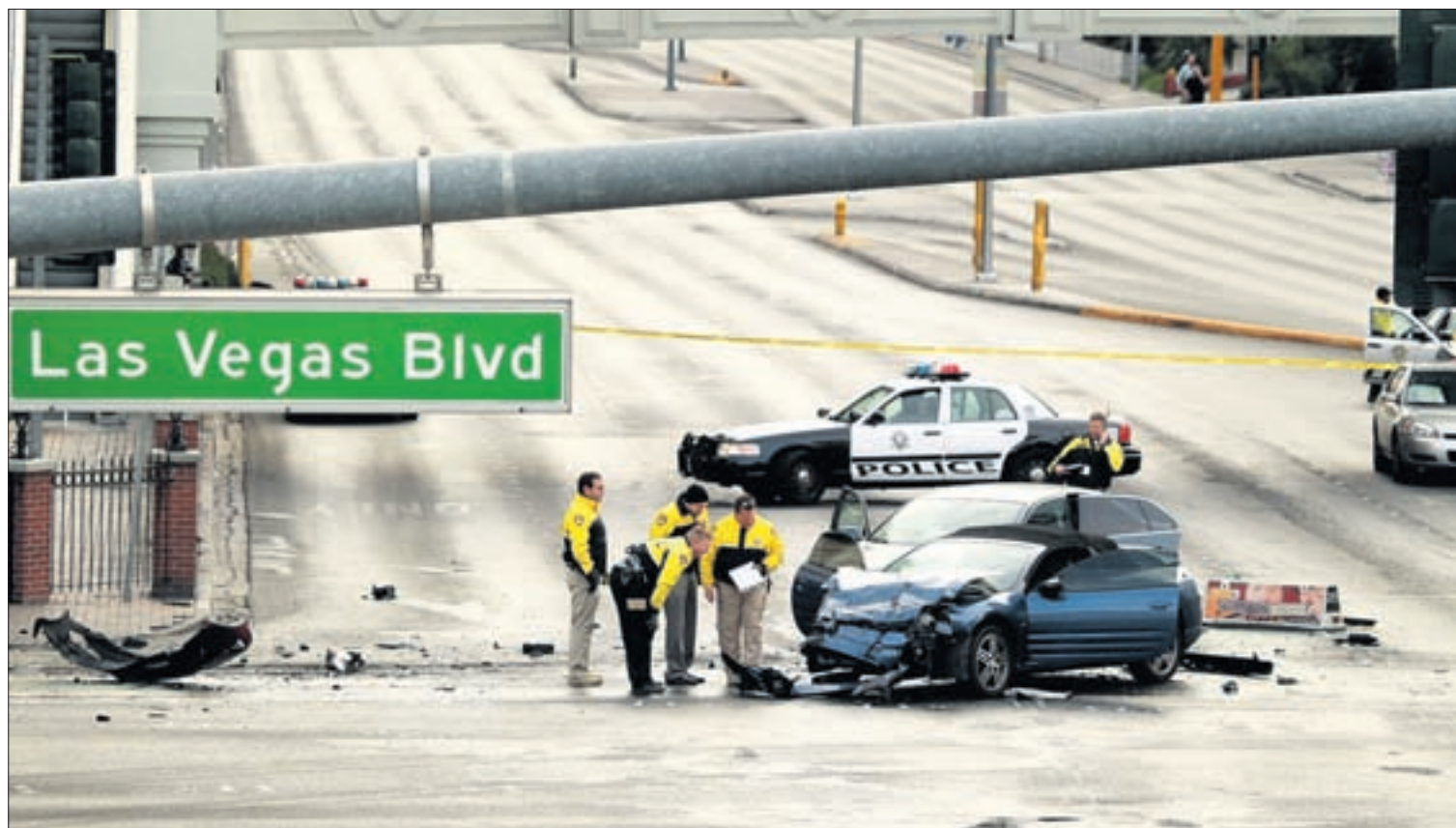
Joyce and her husband,

Dave Joyce, were among the guests staying in high-rise hotels around the scene who found police tape blocking access to normally busy pedestrian crossings at the intersection. Hotel security officers and police shooed away people with cameras, and footbridges linking resort hotels were closed. Traffic around the area was

snarled.

Sheahan said the closures were expected to last most of the day while crime scene investigators collected evidence.

"CSI," said Dave Joyce. "There it is. Real crime scene investigators in Las Vegas." Sheahan said the attack was not a rolling gun battle as previously described. □



Law enforcement personnel investigate the scene of a multi-vehicle accident on Las Vegas Blvd and Flamingo Road Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013. Authorities say a Range Rover opened fire on a Maserati at a stoplight, sending it crashing into a taxi that went up in flames, leaving three people dead and at least six injured.

(AP Photo/Jeff Scheid)

Hagel has enough support for defense secretary

DONNA CASSATA

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Barring any new, damaging

information, Chuck Hagel has secured the necessary votes for the Senate to confirm him to be the next



Former Nebraska Republican Sen. Chuck Hagel, President Obama's choice for defense secretary, testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington.

(AP Photo/Susan Walsh)

U.S. defense secretary. A vote ending the bitter fight over President Barack Obama's Cabinet choice is expected next week.

Hagel cleared the threshold when 30-year veteran Republican Sen. Richard Shelby said he would vote for the former Republican after joining other party members last week in an unprecedented delaying maneuver of the Pentagon nominee. "He's probably as good as we're going to get," Shelby told an Alabama newspaper.

In another boost for Hagel's nomination, former Republican leader Bob Dole, a decorated World War II veteran, issued a

statement Thursday saying, "Hagel's wisdom and courage make him uniquely qualified to be secretary of defense and lead the men and women of our armed forces. Chuck Hagel will be an exceptional leader at an important time."

If confirmed, Hagel, a twice-wounded Vietnam combat veteran, would succeed Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, who is stepping down after four years first as CIA director and then Pentagon chief. Although a Republican, Hagel has faced strong Republican opposition, with many of his former colleagues voting last week to stall the nomination. □



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Maine: Landlord suspicious of Zumba instructor

DAVID SHARP
Associated Press

ALFRED, Maine (AP) — Risque details emerged in court Thursday as testimony began in the trial of an insurance businessman accused of helping a Zumba instructor engage in prostitution in a quaint Maine village. A landlord who rented office space to the Zumba teacher testified he became suspicious when tenants heard "groaning and moaning." A pizza shop manager told a jury that the woman disrobed in front of him during a delivery. The witnesses testified in the trial of Mark Strong Sr.,

who is charged with 13 counts that accuse him of helping Alexis Wright engage in prostitution. Wright, 30, is accused of engaging in prostitution at the dance studio, at an office across the street and at her own home. Authorities have said she videotaped clients without their knowledge. She will be tried later. The case has generated attention because of the size of the alleged operation and its location in a seaside village near Kennebunkport, home of the summer compound of former President George H.W. Bush and his family. A lawyer who has seen

Wright's alleged client list says it includes more than 150 names. Law enforcement officials say Wright kept meticulous records suggesting the sex acts generated \$150,000 over 18 months. Christopher West, a landlord who rented office space to Wright, testified he began receiving complaints from other tenants within a couple of weeks. He testified about loud music, moaning, groaning and laughter coming from the office. He became suspicious when he witnessed men coming and going. He told police he intended to evict her but was asked to hold off because of an ongoing investigation. After police executed a search warrant, he said he discovered a box of adult toys, a bin of used condoms and baby wipes, and a massage table. An agent seized two video cameras, including one that was hidden. Dan Racaniello, manager of a pizza shop next to the studio, testified that when he delivered spaghetti and meatballs with garlic bread, Wright came to the door wearing only a towel, which she dropped to reveal she was naked.



Attorney Daniel Lilley, who is representing Mark Strong Sr., gives his opening statements in the Zumba prostitution case in York County Superior Court, Alfred, Maine. Strong is on trial accused of helping Alexis Wright run a one-woman prostitution business from a Kennebunk dance studio.

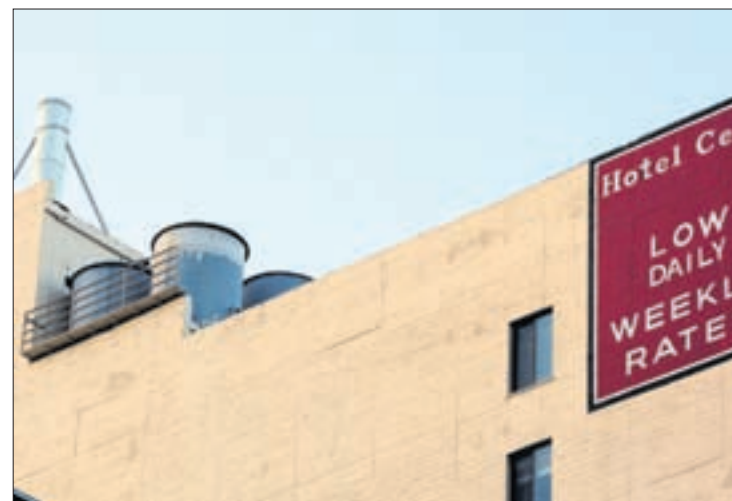
(AP Photo/Shawn P. Ouellette)

Bush wants out of pro-gay marriage ad

DALLAS (AP) — Former first lady Laura Bush wants to be removed from a pro-gay marriage group's national advertising campaign featuring prominent people speaking on the topic. The Respect for Marriage Coalition has launched print, television and on-line ads that also include

clips of President Barack Obama, former Vice President Dick Cheney and former Secretary of Defense Colin Powell talking about same-sex marriage. Bush spokeswoman Anne MacDonald says Bush "did not approve of her inclusion in this advertisement nor is she associated in any way with the group that

made the ad." The campaign features a clip of Bush saying on CNN, "When couples are committed to each other and love each other then they ought to have the same sort of rights that everyone has." The coalition didn't immediately comment Thursday.



Water tanks seen on the roof of the Hotel Cecil, Thursday Feb. 21, 2013. Police say the body of a missing Canadian woman, 21-year-old Elisa Lam, was found at the bottom of one of four cisterns on the roof of the hotel.

(AP Photo/Nick Ut)

Body of Canadian woman found in hotel water tank

TAMI ABDOLLAH
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Canadian tourist Elisa Lam had been missing for about two weeks when officials at the historic Cecil Hotel in downtown Los Angeles found her body in a water cistern on the hotel roof. Guest complaints about low water pressure prompted a maintenance worker to make the gruesome discovery earlier this week, and officials were trying to determine if the 21-year-old was killed or if her death was a bizarre accident. British tourist Michael Baugh and his wife said water had only trickled from the tap for days before the body was found. "The moment we found out, we felt a bit sick to the stomach, quite literally," Baugh said. The discovery of Lam's body called into question the safety of the hotel's water. She was found in one of four cisterns that provide guests with water for washing and drinking. Los Angeles County Department of Public Health officials issued a do-not-

drink order at the hotel while a lab analyzes its water, said Terrance Powell, a director coordinating the department's response. The results of the lab tests were expected to be released Thursday. Powell said the likelihood of contamination is minimal given the large amount of water the body was found in, but the department is being extra cautious. Los Angeles Police Department Sgt. Rudy Lopez called Lam's death suspicious. Before she died, hotel surveillance footage showed her inside an elevator pushing buttons and sticking her head out the doors, looking in both directions. Lam, of Vancouver, British Columbia, traveled alone to Los Angeles on Jan. 26 and was last seen five days later by workers at the 600-room hotel near Skid Row. The cisterns are on a platform at least 10 feet (3 meters) above the roof. To get to the tanks, someone would have to go to the top floor then take a staircase with a locked door and emergency alarm preventing roof access.

Drew Peterson gets 38 years in prison for murder

Continued from front

Drew Peterson's sentence came moments after he shocked the courtroom with a rare public outburst of anger as he proclaimed

has served since his arrest. Jurors convicted Peterson in September. Neighbors found Savio's body in a dry bathtub at home with a gash on her head — her hair soaked in blood.

challenged Glasgow to look him in the eyes. Glasgow, who had been taking notes, laid down his pen, folded his arms and looked straight back at Peterson.

believe her husband killed Savio.

Before Thursday, Drew Peterson had never publicly showed concern about the serious charges and the possible sentence he faced. The glib, cocky Drew Peterson seemed to taunt authorities before his 2009 arrest, suggesting a "Win a Date With Drew Contest" and then, after his arrest, "Win a Conjugal Visit With Drew Contest." His personality loomed large over his trial, illustrated by crowds of bystanders gathered outside the courthouse in a circuslike atmosphere after his conviction last year, cheering as prosecutors walked by and shouting, "Loser. Loser. Loser," at defense attor-

neys.

The verdict was a vindication for Glasgow and his team, who gambled by putting on a case they conceded was filled with holes.

Prosecutors had no physical evidence tying Peterson to Savio's death and no witnesses placing him at the scene. They were forced to rely on typically barred hearsay — statements Savio made to others before she died and that Stacy Peterson made before she vanished. Illinois passed a hearsay law in 2008 tailored to Peterson's case, dubbed "Drew's Law," which assisted in making some of the evidence admissible at Peterson's trial. □



In this courtroom sketch, Drew Peterson, left, watches Will County States Attorney James K. Glasgow during Peterson's sentencing for the 2004 murder of his third wife Kathleen Savio before Judge Edward Burmila at the Will County Courthouse Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, in Joliet, Ill. Later in the day, Burmila sentenced Peterson to 38 years in prison for the crime.

(AP Photo/Tom Gianni)

his innocence in Savio's death.

"I did not kill Kathleen!" he shouted at the top of his lungs, emphasizing every word.

Peterson seemed to look across the courtroom at Savio's family. Savio's sister Susan Doman shot back "Yes, you did. You liar!" before the judge ordered sheriff's deputies to remove her from the courtroom. Illinois does not have the death penalty, and Peterson had faced a maximum 60-year prison term. The judge gave him four years' credit for time he

After his outburst, Peterson addressed the judge with a rambling speech, claiming he had been unfairly convicted. He spoke in mostly hushed tones, crying and trying to regain his composure at times. His voice quivered and his hands were shaking as he reached out for a glass of water.

He aimed some of his anger at lead prosecutor James Glasgow, saying sarcastically that Glasgow could now celebrate because he had destroyed Peterson's life.

Minutes later, Peterson

"Never forget what you've done here," Peterson said, gritting his teeth.

Earlier Thursday, Judge Edward Burmila denied a defense request to grant Peterson a retrial. Peterson's attorneys contended his former lead attorney, Joel Brodsky, botched the initial trial.

A turning point at the trial came when the defense called a divorce attorney who said he spoke to Stacy Peterson before she vanished. The attorney, though a witness for the defense, stressed to jurors that Stacy Peterson seemed to truly





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Ford boosting small-engine production in the U.S.

TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

BROOK PARK, Ohio (AP) —

Ford is preparing for a day in the near future when a small four-cylinder engine will be the motor of choice in most of its vehicles, perhaps even in pickup trucks. Demand for the company's 2-Liter turbocharged engine is growing so fast in North America that Ford announced plans Thursday to start building the engine late next year at a factory in Brook Park, Ohio, near Cleveland. Currently it's importing the motors from a factory in Valencia, Spain.

The Brook Park plant now employs about 1,300 people who make V-6 engines for the F-Series pickup truck, the most popular vehicle in America.

Ford plans a \$200 million investment in the plant and promises 450 more jobs, the halfway point in a Ford hiring spurt that will total 12,000 U.S. hourly jobs by 2015. But few think that the hiring will stop at 450, as the company and its customers look to smaller

"EcoBoost" turbocharged engines to fight high gas prices and comply with more stringent government fuel economy regulations.

further, because the products it's going to go into are some of our best-selling cars." Plus, U.S. auto sales are



Larry Warner pressure tests lines for the turbocharger on Ford's EcoBoost V-6 at Cleveland Engine Plant No. 1 in Brook Park, Ohio. Ford is moving production of a popular small engine from Spain to Cleveland as sales of four-cylinder motors continue to rise.

(AP Photo/Mark Duncan)

Demand for the 2-Liter turbocharged motor has exceeded Ford's expectations, Joe Hinrichs, the company's new president for the Americas, said after making the announcement. "You never know when that's going to go

growing. Industry analysts predict about 15.3 million cars and trucks will be sold this year, up 800,000 from last year. It's far higher than in 2009, when frozen credit and high unemployment cut sales to 10.4 million, a three-decade low.

More customers are choosing turbocharged smaller engines as Ford and other manufacturers offer them in more models. The engines get better gas mileage than six-cylinder motors. And the turbochargers give them more power

when needed. In the U.S., new vehicles will have to average 54.5 miles per gallon (4.3 liters per 100 kms) by 2025, twice the roughly 27 mpg (8.7 liters per 100 kms) they get today.

Ford offered the 2-Liter EcoBoost engine in 2011 on its Edge and Explorer SUVs in the U.S. Last year it added the new Escape small SUV, the Taurus large sedan, the Fusion midsize sedan and a high-performance version of the Focus compact to the list. This year the Lincoln MKZ midsize luxury car also has it.

Two years ago Ford sold 6,900 vehicles equipped with 2-Liter EcoBoost engines in the U.S., and that rose to 96,000 last year. In January Ford sold 15,000 vehicles with the engines, putting it on pace to sell more than 180,000 this year.

Ford expects to sell more than 500,000 cars and trucks with turbocharged four-cylinder and V-6 engines in the U.S. this year, up from about 334,000 in 2012. The company said turbocharged engines should be available on 90 percent of its North American models this year, and 95 percent by 2015.

The four-cylinder is in just about every Ford vehicle but full-size pickups, and even they could have it in the future, said Scott

Makowski, global design manager for Ford's four-cylinder engines.

Technically it's possible to power a pickup with a smaller motor by adding boost to the turbocharger, Makowski said. Turbochargers pump high concentrations of air into the piston chamber. That allows more gas to be sent in and offers extra acceleration or hauling capacity whenever drivers step on the pedal. Turbos aren't used under normal driving conditions, so the engines get better mileage because they behave like normal four-cylinder motors.

"You can always go up on horsepower per liter," Makowski said. "We're always being asked for more performance, and we're always being asked for more fuel economy."

The prospects are good for more hiring at the Cleveland Engine Plant, United Auto Workers Vice President Jimmy Settles, who handles talks with Ford. A second engine plant and a metal casting factory were closed in the Cleveland area as Ford downsized in the early 2000s. The company also plans to shutter a nearby metal stamping plant in 2015, but the roughly 330 workers there likely will transfer to the engine factory. □

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5 big US banks have cut mortgage debt by \$19B

MARCY GORDON

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Five of the biggest U.S. banks have cut struggling homeowners' mortgage balances by \$19 billion, part of a total \$45.8 billion in relief provided under a landmark settlement over foreclosure abuses.

More than 550,000 borrowers received some form of mortgage relief between March 1 and Dec. 31, 2012, according to a report issued Thursday by Joseph Smith, the monitor of the settlement.

That translates to about \$82,668 per homeowner, according to the report, which is based on the banks' own accounts of their progress. Smith said he must confirm the banks'

data before they can get credit under the settlement.

The deal was struck a year ago by the federal government and 49 states with the



Hope rises for families 'underwater' as five of the biggest U.S. banks have cut struggling homeowners' mortgage balances by \$19 billion.

(AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

five largest U.S. mortgage servicers: Bank of America Corp., JPMorgan Chase &

Co., Citigroup Inc., Wells Fargo & Co. and Ally Financial Inc. Under the settlement, the five agreed to reduce balances on mortgages where the borrower owes more than the home is worth and to refinance some loans.

The banks also are required to make foreclosure their last resort, and they can't foreclose on a homeowner who is being considered for a loan modification.

The settlement ended a painful chapter of the financial crisis when home values sank and millions edged toward foreclosure. Many companies had processed foreclosures without verifying documents.

The agreement reduces mortgage debt for only a fraction of those whose

mortgages are underwater.

About 11 million U.S. households are underwater, and the settlement is expected to help about a million of them. Smith's report says \$19.5 billion of the \$45.8 billion in relief was in the form of short sales, in which lenders agree to accept less than what the seller owes on the mortgage.

Of the roughly \$19 billion in reduced mortgage prin-

cipal, according to the report, Bank of America had provided \$13.5 billion; JPMorgan Chase & Co., \$1.8 billion; Citigroup Inc., \$1.9 billion; Wells Fargo & Co., \$1.4 billion; and Ally Financial Inc., \$238 million.

Ally, the former financial arm of General Motors Co., now has fulfilled its obligation for the relief it is required to provide under the settlement, Smith said. □

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New York City:

School bus drivers return to work after monthlong strike

AL BAKER

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NEW YORK — Several drivers could not find their buses. Some of the big yellow vehicles seemed ill prepared for the road, lacking license plates or inspection stickers. At a bus depot in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, a driver for Reliant Transportation turned a key in his vehicle's ignition, but it failed to start.

"I'm looking for any bus that works," the driver said. On top of that, scores of

matrons — who work with drivers from a separate union on buses that carry students with special needs — showed up at their depot in Brooklyn only to learn they were apparently unwelcome, since teams of replacement workers had been taken on by their employer.

It was before dawn Wednesday, and drivers and other workers who are among the 8,800 members of New York City's main union for bus drivers, Lo-

cal 1181 of the Amalgamated Transit Union, were back on the job after ending a strike that started more than a month ago

schools were closed after the Oct. 29 storm. Others were converted to shelters for displaced families. The bus strike affected more

service had affected students.

At Public School 36 in St. Albans, Queens, the principal, Lynn M. Staton, said



School buses in commute in the Upper West Side neighborhood of New York, Feb. 21, 2013. Drivers were back to work this week after New York City's main union for school bus drivers agreed to end its monthlong strike last week.

(Robert Caplin/The New York Times)

over job-protection issues. Though many drivers said it felt good to be working again, their first post-strike hours were defined by chaos, confusion and, some drivers said, possibly missed pickups of students who might have given up waiting. For the students, the bus service came just in time because the city's Education Department had scheduled school on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday — which were supposed to be part of a weeklong winter break — to make up for time lost after Hurricane Sandy. Some

than 100,000 students, tens of thousands of them children with special needs, who often travel long distances to get to school. The drivers decided to halt their strike, with their concerns still on the table, and to try their luck with the person who will replace Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, who had refused to accept the union's demands.

At the schools on Wednesday, principals checked attendance to see how the combination of the unexpected school days and the resumption of bus

that if four or five students were missing from each of her school's third- through fifth-grade classes, she would postpone scheduled practice tests in math and English.

But she said that she expected "business as usual," and that only three teachers had been excused for vacations planned before the makeup days were announced.

Early in the day, Marge Feinberg, a spokeswoman for the Education Department, said that all 7,700 public school bus routes were running. □


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Police replace top Pistorius investigator



Investigating officer Hilton Botha sits inside the witness box during the bail hearing for Oscar Pistorius at the magistrate court in Pretoria, South Africa, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013. (AP Photo/Themba Hadebe)

C. TORCHIA
JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — South African police appointed a new chief investigator Thursday in the Oscar Pistorius murder case, replacing a veteran detective after unsettling revelations that the officer was charged with seven counts of attempted murder. The sensational twist in the state's troubled investigation fueled growing public fascination with the case against the double-

amputee Olympian, who is charged with premeditated murder in the Valentine's Day slaying of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp. Pistorius, a sporting icon and source of inspiration to millions until the shooting last week, is backed by a high-powered team of lawyers and publicists. The abruptness of his fall, and its gruesome circumstances, have gripped a global audience and put South Africa's police and judicial system under the spotlight. The man at the center of the storm sat in the dock during his bail hearing, mostly keeping his composure in contrast to slumped-over outbursts of weeping on previous days in court. In front of Pistorius, defense lawyer Barry Roux pounced on the apparent disarray in the state's case, laying out arguments that amounted to a test run for the full trial yet to come. Roux pointed to what he called the "poor quality" of the state's investigation and raised the matter of intent, saying Pistorius and Steenkamp had a "loving relationship" and the athlete had no motive to plan

her killing. Pistorius, 26, says he mistook Steenkamp for an intruder when he shot her through a locked bathroom door in his home. Prosecutors believe the shooting happened after the couple got into an argument, and prosecutor Gerrie Nel painted a picture of a man he said was "willing and ready to fire and kill." Much of the drama Thursday, however, happened outside the courtroom as South African police scrambled to get their investigation on track. In a news conference at a training academy, National Police Commissioner Riah Phiyega said a senior detective would gather a team of "highly skilled and experienced" officers to investigate the killing of 29-year-old Steenkamp, a model and budding reality TV contestant. The decision to put police Lt. Gen. Vinesh Moonoo in charge came soon after word emerged that the initial chief investigator, Hilton Botha, is facing attempted murder charges, and a day after he offered testimony damaging to the prosecu-

tion. Botha acknowledged Wednesday in court that nothing in Pistorius' version of the fatal shooting contradicted what police had discovered, even though

there have been some discrepancies. Botha also said that police left a 9 mm slug in the toilet and lost track of allegedly illegal ammunition found in Pistorius' home. □

12 killed in twin bomb blasts in India

OMER FAROOQ
Associated Press

HYDERABAD, India (AP) — A pair of bombs exploded Thursday evening in a crowded shopping area in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad, killing at least 12 people and wounding scores of others in the worst bombing in the country in more than a year, officials said. The blasts occurred about two minutes apart at around 7 p.m. outside a movie theater and a bus

station, police said. Storefronts were shattered, motorcycles covered in debris, and food and plates from a roadside restaurant were scattered on the ground near a tangle of dead bodies. Passersby rushed the bleeding and wounded out of the area. "This is a dastardly attack, the guilty will not go unpunished," Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said. He appealed to the public to remain calm. The bombs were attached

to two bicycles about 150 meters (500 feet) apart in Dilsukh Nagar district, Home Minister Sushilkumar Shinde told reporters in New Delhi. The district is a usually crowded shopping area near a residential neighborhood.

When asked if the government had any suspects, Shinde responded: "We have to investigate." The blast killed 12 people, Home Secretary R.K. Singh said. □

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Car bomb kills at least 53 in city of Damascus

ALBERT AJI
RYAN LUCAS
Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — A car bomb exploded Thursday near Syria's ruling party headquarters in Damascus, killing at least 53 people and scattering mangled bodies among the blazing wreckage in one of the bloodiest days in the capital since the uprising began almost two years ago. Elsewhere in the city, two other bombs struck intelligence offices, killing 22, and mortar rounds hit the army's central command, activists said. Recent rebel advances in the Damascus suburbs, combined with the bombings and three straight days

of mortar attacks, mark the most sustained challenge of the civil war for control of the seat of President Bashar Assad's power. Syrian state media said the car bombing near the Baath Party headquarters and the Russian Embassy was a suicide attack that killed 53 civilians and wounded more than 200, with children among the casualties. Anti-regime activists put the death toll at 61, which would make it the deadliest Damascus bombing of the revolt. The violence has shattered the sense of normalcy that the Syrian regime has desperately tried to maintain in Damascus, a city that has largely been insulated



Syrian security agents carry a body following a huge explosion that shook central Damascus, Syria, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013.

(AP Photo/SANA)

from the bloodshed and destruction that has left other urban centers in ruins. The rebels launched an offensive on Damascus in July following a stunning bombing on a high-level government crisis meeting that killed four top regime officials, including Assad's brother-in-law and the defense minister. Following that attack, rebel groups that had established footholds in the

suburbs pushed in, battling government forces for more than a week before being routed and swept out. Since then, government warplanes have pounded opposition strongholds on the outskirts, and rebels have managed only small incursions on the city's southern and eastern sides. But the recent bombings and mortar attacks suggest that instead of trying a ma-

ior assault, rebel fighters are resorting to guerrilla tactics to loosen Assad's grip on the heavily fortified capital. The fighting in Damascus also follows a string of tactical victories in recent weeks for the rebels - capturing the nation's largest hydro-electric dam and overtaking airbases in the north-east - that have contributed to the sense that the opposition may be gaining some momentum. □

Iran planning oil refinery in Pakistan

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — An Iranian semi-official news agency says Iran is planning to build an oil refinery in Pakistan. The plan is part of Iran's

effort to decrease international pressure on its oil industry, which has been target of international sanctions over the country's disputed nuclear program.

Thursday's report by Fars quotes Asim Hussain, an adviser to the Pakistani prime minister, as saying that the refinery in the Pakistani port of Gwadar will be able to refine 400,000 barrels a day.

The report says Iran will sell products from the refinery to Pakistan in return of food, especially wheat, meat and rice. The deal to build the refinery came after a meeting between Iran's oil minister Rostam Ghasemi and the Pakistani adviser. □

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3 convicted in London terrorist bombing plot

JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — They were very ordinary would-be terrorists, with big plans but bad luck.

On Thursday, a London jury convicted the three young British men of being ringleaders of an al-Qaida-inspired plot to explode knapsack bombs in crowded parts of Birmingham, England's second-largest city. The men had pleaded not guilty, but were recorded discussing plans for attacks that one said would be "another 9/11."

The trial exposed how the trio — Ashik Ali, 27; Irfan Khalid, also 27; and 31-year-old Irfan "Chubbs" Naseer — were foiled by a mix of police intelligence, personal incompetence, and lousy luck as they tried to spread terror.

They attempted to recruit others to their cause, but four young men they dispatched to Pakistan for training were sent home within days when the family of one man found out. Those four have since pleaded guilty to terrorism-related offenses.

The plotters initially raised cash as street collectors for Muslim charities. But when Rahin Ahmed, an alleged co-conspirator described as the cell's "chief financier," tried to boost the group's budget on the financial markets, he lost the bulk of the funds through his "unwise and incompetent" trading, prosecutor Brian Altman said.

Among the pieces of evidence at the four-month trial was a sports injury cool pack, which prosecutors said Naseer had mistakenly believed would contain

ammonium nitrate, a key bomb-making ingredient.

The group considered a variety of outlandish attacks, including tying sharp blades to the front of a truck and driving it into a crowd. Naseer was heard talking about the possibility of mixing poison into creams such as Vaseline or Nivea and smearing them on car handles to cause mass deaths.

Despite the amateurish nature of some of their efforts, officials said the group was serious about sowing chaos. The men were "the real deal" and, if successful, would have perpetrated "another 9/11 or another 7/7 in the U.K.," said Detective Inspector Adam Gough, the case's senior investigating officer, referring to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, which killed nearly 3,000 people, as well as the July 7, 2005, London transit bombings, which killed 52 commuters.

Prosecutors described the men as a home-grown terror cell inspired by the anti-Western sermons of U.S.-born Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, who was killed in Yemen in a U.S. drone strike in September 2011.

Among evidence found by investigators was a partially burned note written by Naseer detailing how to make what an expert witness said would have been a viable bomb — although no evidence of such an explosive was recovered. Prosecutors said the men ultimately gravitated toward a plan to detonate up to eight knapsack bombs — either on timers or in suicide attacks — in a bid to bring mass carnage to Birmingham. □



Left to right, Irfan Khalid, Irfan Naseer and Ashik Ali, all from Birmingham, England.

(AP Photo/West Midlands Police)



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Cubans use gems, autos as collateral

HAVANA (AP) — Cubans can now use personal property such as jewelry, cars and works of art as collateral for loan applications under the island's nascent lending system, according to a new law enacted Thursday.

The measure expands Cubans' ability to apply for credit to build homes, start their own businesses or invest in farming equipment. Previously Cuban banks — all of them run by the state — only accepted liquid collateral such as solvent co-signers, bank deposits and personal income.

Some would-be lenders have complained that they were unable to get credit because they lacked such liquid assets. Cuba announced its new credit system in late 2011. Most loans have been small so far,

and are limited according to the lender's ability to repay.

Part of President Raul Castro's economic reform plan, the rules on collateral are apparently intended to give the expanding entrepreneurial class a leg up. Changes under Castro in recent years have increased the ranks of legal private business operators, independent workers and farmers.

Taking effect Thursday with its publication in the government's Official Gazette, the law lists items that are acceptable collateral including precious stones, paintings, sculptures, second homes and agricultural goods from livestock to farm equipment.

The goal is to "diversify the ways people can access credit, now with the possibility of offering as collateral other goods that are not the ones traditionally accepted by the bank," Juana Lilia Delgado, a member of a commission set up to supervise the economic reforms, told Communist Party newspaper Granma. □

"Latin American Idol" winner held in Dominican

EZEQUIEL ABIU LOPEZ

Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — A winner of the TV talent show "Latin American Idol" who was once loved by thousands in her native Dominican Republic was charged with drug smuggling after police found heroin stuffed in the heels of her platform shoes, authorities said Thursday. Martha Heredia was arrested early Thursday as she was about to board a plane to New York, said Frank Duran, the National Drug Control Agency's director for the city of Santiago.

He said police found 2.9 pounds (1.3 kilograms) of heroin in the heels of three pairs of shoes packed in her suitcase. Police also ordered Heredia to undergo X-ray tests to determine whether she had any drugs hidden inside her body, but none were found.

Duran said police are interrogating Heredia to determine whether she was working as a mule for a drug-trafficking organization.

Prosecutor Luisa Liranzo said Heredia does not yet have an attorney. If found guilty, she could face more

than 10 years in prison.

The 22-year-old had become a star in the Dominican Republic after she

and then-President Leonel Fernandez urged Dominicans to vote for her.

The country was paralyzed



"Latin American Idol" winner Martha Heredia was arrested early Thursday as she was about to board a plane from Dominican Republic to New York. Police say they found 2.9 pounds of heroin in the heels of three pairs of shoes packed in her suitcase.

(Handout Photo)

won the final "Latin American Idol" contest in 2009. The show, which ran for three years, was a Spanish-language version of the popular British "Idols" franchise.

On the night Heredia vied for the title, thousands of Dominicans gathered in public plazas to watch her sing on huge TV screens,

as Dominicans watched the show, prompting Fernandez to quip, "It was said the country came under curfew without the need of a presidential decree."

Miguel Vargas, president of the main opposition party at the time, had donated thousands of prepaid phone cards the night of the final contest so citizens

could vote for their compatriot.

"Martha's tenacity and creative capacity are an example, and the least we can do is support her efforts," Vargas said at the time.

Dozens of fans greeted Heredia when she returned to the Dominican Republic after her win, and Fernandez invited her to the National Palace. In February 2010, he gave her the National Youth Award.

"The politicians are lucky you're not running for president because you would beat them all," he said at the time.

But Heredia, nicknamed "La Baby" because of her penchant for calling people "baby", disappeared shortly after all the fanfare, drawing speculations including that she was pregnant. Then her name was back in the news for different reasons. In December 2010, Heredia hit and killed a teenage Haitian boy with her car as he tried to cross a highway by foot. She was later ordered to pay his family some \$275,000 as part of a lawsuit. The boy's relatives were angered that she did not meet with them to offer her condolences. □

Haiti's 'Baby Doc' spurns court orders again

TRENTON DANIEL

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier defied a judge's order Thursday and refused to attend a hearing to determine whether he will again face charges for human rights abuses committed during the nearly 15 years of his brutal regime. Duvalier defense attorney Reynold Georges showed up 90 minutes after the hearing was scheduled to start and announced that he had filed an appeal of the judge's order. The session then began in a courtroom crowded with reporters and observers.

Georges, a brash former senator, said he was confident that the Supreme



Former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier, center, leaves Canape Vert hospital in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Duvalier has spurned a judge's order to appear in court, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, for a hearing on whether to reinstate charges of human rights abuses against him.

(AP Photo/Dieu Nalio Chery)

Court would not only overturn the order to compel Duvalier's presence in court but also block the effort by victims of the Duvalier regime from get-

ting the court to reinstate the charges. "We're waiting for the Supreme Court decision and we're going to win," Georges said. "I don't lose. I'm Haiti's John-

nie Cochran."

Attorneys for people who filed complaints alleging they were tortured by agents of Duvalier's regime urged the judge to go forward with the case and to arrest the former leader for not showing up in court.

Judge Jean Joseph Lebun said Duvalier had no grounds to appeal to the Supreme Court at this stage and he ordered the prosecutor to bring the former leader to court "without delay." It was not immediately clear whether there would be any penalties for not complying with the order. Duvalier ruled Haiti from 1971-1986, a time when thousands were imprisoned, tortured and killed for opposing the government. □



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questions and provide estimates. Whatever your query regarding Beauty and Health in Aruba, Expo Beauty and Health has the answer as well as numerous opportunities to win

valuable prizes offered by all vendors. For the second year Multi Media International N.V. has organized the event that will provide entertainment and valuable information for any-

one that wishes to live the "beauty and healthy life" in Aruba!

Dates and Times: April 26: 5-10pm (Red Carpet Event); April 27: 12-8pm; and April 28: 12-8pm. □

At the Caribbean Palm Village:

James Foley and Joyce Blair honored by ATA

NOORD - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring two very nice person whom are loyal and friendly visitors of Aruba, at the Caribbean palm Village, as Distinguished Visitor and Ambassador of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary titles are presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10-to-19 and 20-or-more consecutive years. The honorees were James Foley from Selkirk, NY as Distinguished Visitor, and Joyce Blair from Burton, Ohio as Ambassador of Goodwill. Both visitors are loyal members of the Caribbean Palm Village, and they love Aruba very much, because of the great friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants and to catch up with longtime friends. The certificates were presented by Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Angie and Farley representing the Caribbean Palm Village. □



Aruba Tourism Authority says Thanks!

Loyal Visitors honored at the Renaissance Ocean Suites

ORANJESTAD - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring two very nice couples whom are loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Renaissance Ocean Suites, as Ambassadors of Goodwill. The

symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years.

The honorees were Barry and Debra Smith from Mid-

dletown, Rhode Island, and Paul and Billie Jean Valento from Little Compton, Rhode Island. Both couples love the Island very much and are loyal members of the Renaissance ocean Suites, and they love the friendly people of Aruba,



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were presented by Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, together with Tino representing the Renaissance Ocean Suites.

AHATA strongly denies hotels are intimidating workers

ORANJESTAD (Thursday February 21, 2013): The CEO of AHATA Mr James Hepple, today denied in the strongest terms the recent statement made by Mr. Diego De Cuba of STA that the "Hotels are intimidating their workers". Mr. Hepple said that this was just another example of Mr De Cuba's misinformation spread to incite more labor disharmony which will inevitably lead to the disruption of Aruba's tourism industry, the main pillar of Aruba's economy. Mr. Hepple deplored the fact that Mr De Cuba was so irresponsible as to accuse two hotels of intimi-

dation when all that had happened was that in one particular hotel two associates had broken in-house rules and had been verbally disciplined by management. No one was suspended nor was suspension ever considered. Mr. Hepple then said it was ridiculous that Mr De Cuba called for laws to protect associates affiliated with a union when there were more than adequate laws already in place to do so. "If the associates feel they have a legitimate case of intimidation then let them file a court case and see what happens. There are laws in place to allow them

to do so" said Mr. Hepple. Mr. Hepple concluded "It is really unfortunate that the STA has chosen to use this inflammatory approach to negotiating labour contracts. The hotels are perfectly willing to work within the existing processes as laid down by law. The hotels and AHATA are not anti-union. It is sad that Mr. De Cuba wants to create this climate of conflict based on innuendo and misrepresentation. This can only lead to enormous disruption of the hotel sector and the tourism industry of Aruba, the main source of income for virtually all Arubans". □



AHATA CEO Mr James Hepple



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You may apply by sending an email to sueellen@arubachamber.com, mentioning your name and phone number by Monday February 25th, 2012, before 12:00 pm. □

Ken Kay honored by ATA at Quality Apartments Aruba



EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very loyal and friendly gentleman, as Ambassador of Goodwill at the Quality Apartments. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to

guests who visit Aruba for 20-or-more consecutive years. The honoree was Ken Kaye from Ontario, Canada.

Ken loves Aruba very much because of the friendly people of Aruba, the beaches, the beautiful weather, casinos, safety and the family atmosphere

and lots of memories and the relaxation. The certificate was presented by Ernest Giel, representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, together with Ken's companion Ana Amatto, and Janique Schilders and Marisella Tromp, representing the Quality Apartments. □



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Kyle Busch celebrates after winning the second of two 150-mile qualifying races for the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Daytona 500 auto race, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

Harvick and Kyle Busch wins Daytona 500 duels

JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

DAYTONA BEACH, Florida (AP) — Kevin Harvick claimed the first of two qualifying races Thursday to secure third spot on the starting grid for the Daytona 500 and establish himself as favorite to win Sunday's NASCAR Sprint Cup season opener.

With Danica Patrick and Jeff Gordon having claimed the top two spots in initial qualifying last weekend, Thursday's two races set the rest of the grid for the season's showpiece event.

Harvick also won an exhibition race at Daytona last weekend and his strong performances give him a favorites tag for Sunday's race that he'd rather be without.

Continued on page 20

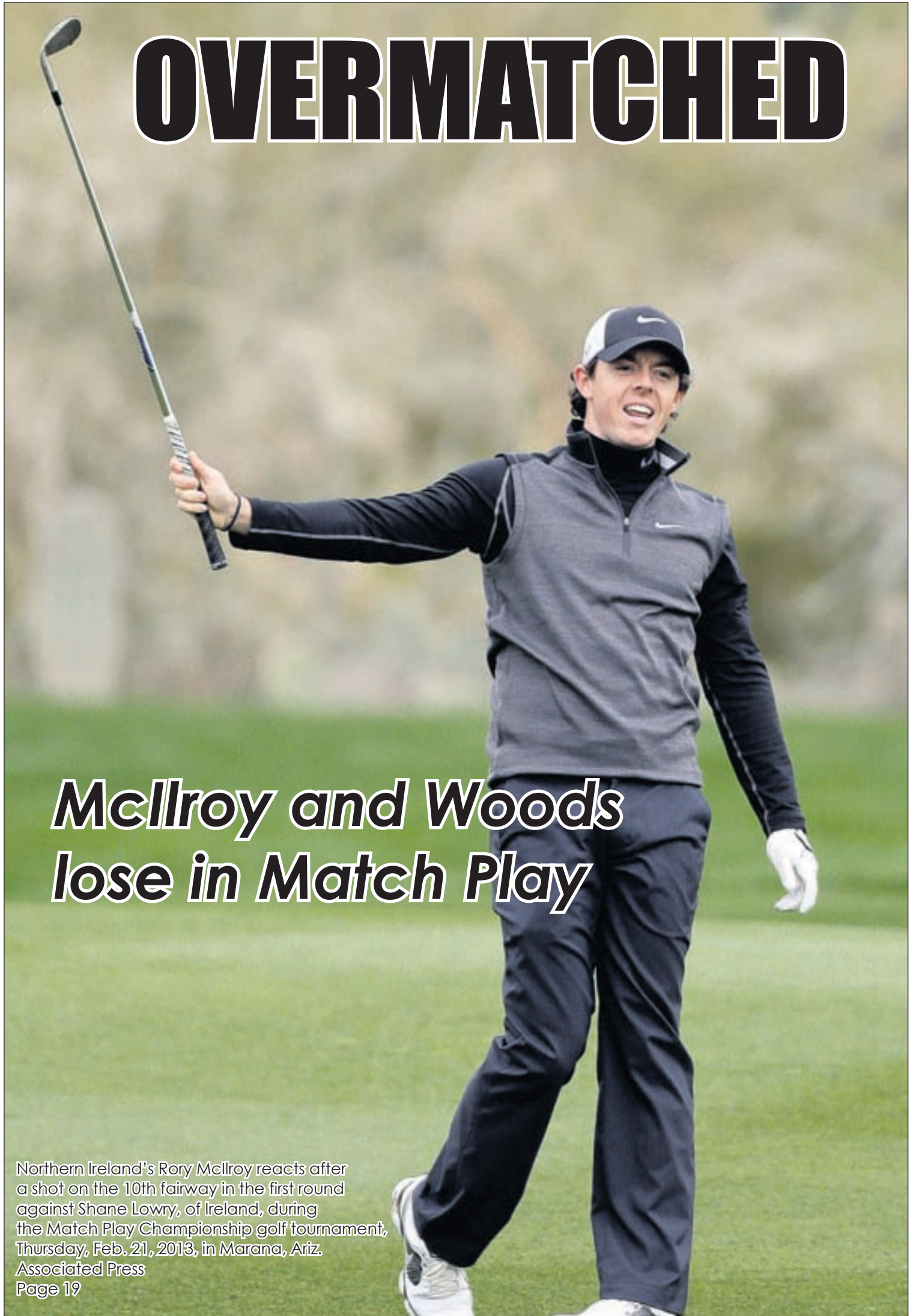
OVERMATCHED

McIlroy and Woods lose in Match Play

Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy reacts after a shot on the 10th fairway in the first round against Shane Lowry, of Ireland, during the Match Play Championship golf tournament, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, in Marana, Ariz.

Associated Press

Page 19



Peterson back from layoff to defend title vs. Holt

WASHINGTON (AP) — As if defending his IBF junior welterweight title before a hometown crowd wasn't enough, Lamont Peterson believes he'll have an extra edge when he steps in against Kendall Holt on Friday.

Rest. Peterson thinks a long spell between bouts, resulting from a positive test for synthetic testosterone and the subsequent cancellation of last May's rematch with Amir Khan, will ultimately give him extra fuel.

"I think at this point, a 14-month layoff did me some justice instead of, you know, hurting," Peterson said.

Peterson (30-1-1) won both the IBF and WBA 140-pound (63 1/2-kilogram) titles in his last fight, a disputed split decision over Khan in Washington in December

2011.

The two were scheduled to fight again in Las Vegas, but Peterson tested positive during random drug testing two months beforehand.

Peterson's camp said the results stemmed from treatment for a medical condition. He was stripped of his WBA belt, but the IBF allowed him to retain its title after an independent review of his medical records. Peterson, 29, said he hopes a win in the relatively low-key backdrop of the D.C. Armory can help rebuild his reputation and lead to more lucrative fights. But he acknowledged some people will forever doubt him.

"Until the day I die, they're probably going to say certain things," Peterson said. "But at this point, I can't worry about it. I just have to go on with my career."

Meanwhile, Holt (28-5) is



Lamont Peterson celebrates his win over Amir Khan, of England, not seen, in a boxing match, Sunday, Dec. 11, 2011, in Washington.

Associated Press

hoping to avoid his third straight title-bout defeat after holding the minor WBO crown in the division for nearly a full year in 2008-09. And although Holt, 31, brings a reputation as one

of the division's fiercest punchers, he said he expects the fight to go the distance against an opponent known for resilience. "Everybody asks me, 'Do I expect to knock Lamont

out?' I don't," Holt said. "I've been pro 12 years. This is going to be the first fight that I've ever walked into the ring with an actual game plan. So, you know, that's how serious I took this fight. It's a fight that could change my life, my kid's life."

While Khan and others have expressed uncertainty over whether they'd fight Peterson again after his positive test, Holt, who has previously shared camps with Peterson, said he had no reservations.

"I've known these guys for years, and they've always seemed to be standup guys," Holt said.

"You know, whether he took (testosterone) for performance enhancing, I doubt it.

But if he did, he did. No matter what, I'm going in there to fight." □



Los Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant, left, passes around Boston Celtics forward Paul Pierce during the first half of their NBA basketball game, Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2013, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Dwight Howard had 24 points and 12 rebounds in helping the Los Angeles Lakers to an emotional 113-99 victory over the Boston Celtics on Wednesday night in their first game since the death of owner Jerry Buss.

Kobe Bryant added 16 points, Steve Nash and Earl Clark had 14 apiece, and Metta World Peace 12 in a game that surely would have delighted Buss, who always loved to win but especially liked beating the Celtics.

The Lakers won their most

recent NBA championship — and last under Buss — in 2010, defeating the Celtics 4-3 in the finals. Buss died Monday at 80 after an 18-month struggle with cancer that had forced him to watch his team's games on TV or an iPad instead of from his suite above the Staples Center court.

Paul Pierce scored 26 points for the Celtics, who fell to 8-17 on the road and lost their third in a row away from home.

Courtney Lee added 20 points and Kevin Garnett had 12 on 6-of-14 shooting.

NBA Roundup

Lakers beat Celtics 113-99 on emotional night

PACERS 125, KNICKS 91
INDIANAPOLIS — Paul George scored 27 points and Indiana powered its way closer to the No. 2 seed in the Eastern Conference by beating New York. David West had 18 points and nine rebounds, and Lance Stephenson added 14 points for Indiana (33-21), which pulled within a half-game of the Knicks for second place in the East. The Pacers shot 53 percent from the field, scored a season-high point total and had a season-best 28 assists against the Atlantic Division leaders.

It was Indiana's largest margin of victory this season and New York's worst loss.

Tyson Chandler led New York with 19 points and 11 rebounds. Carmelo Anthony, the league's No. 2 scorer, finished with 15 points on 7-for-21 shooting.

ROCKETS 122, THUNDER 119
HOUSTON (AP) — James Harden scored a career-

high 46 points and Jeremy Lin added 29 as the Houston mounted a furious fourth-quarter comeback. Houston was down by 14 points with about seven minutes left.

The Rockets used a 21-4 run to erase the deficit and take a 114-111 lead with 1:46 remaining. Harden stepped back under heavy pressure from Serge Ibaka to sink a 3 to tie it, before Lin connected on one seconds later to give the Rockets their first lead of the second half.

Harden made a bucket before Ibaka made two free throws. Then came another 3 by Lin to extend the lead to 119-113.

Thabo Sefolosha led the Thunder with 28 points and had six 3-pointers, both career highs. His previous career high was 22, which he reached twice, most recently in 2008.

Westbrook also scored 28 points and added 10 rebounds and eight assists.

Kevin Durant had 16 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists for his second career triple-double.

HEAT 103, HAWKS 90

ATLANTA (AP) — Miami scored the first 13 points of the fourth quarter to erase Atlanta's 10-point lead and the Heat, led by LeBron James' 24 points, ended beat the Hawks 103-90 on Wednesday night to extend their season-best winning streak to eight games. Dwyane Wade scored 20 points and Shane Battier had 17, hitting three 3-pointers in the final period. James had 11 assists and six rebounds but could not extend his franchise-record streak of seven straight games with at least 30 points.

Miami outscored Atlanta 40-17 in the final period after trailing 73-63 through three quarters.

Al Horford led the Hawks with 27 points and nine rebounds. Kyle Korver had 12 points, all on 3-pointers. □

Rory McIlroy, Tiger Woods eliminated at Match Play

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

MARANA, Arizona (AP)

— Rory McIlroy and Tiger Woods were both eliminated from the Match Play Championship on Thursday — the first time in 11 years the top two seeds were knocked out on the first day.

Shane Lowry made a 4-foot par putt on the 18th hole to eliminate McIlroy, making it three years out of four that the top seed went home after day one.

Moments later, Charles Howell III beat the second-seeded Woods on the 17th hole. Howell nearly holed a wedge for birdie on the 16th and made a 25-foot birdie on the 16th to seize control. "I had nothing to lose," said Howell, who started the year outside the top 100 in the world and hasn't qualified for this World Golf Championship in five years. "In this format, match play is crazy. He's Tiger Woods. I was lucky to hang in there." Along with McIlroy and Woods, a more welcome departure was the snow which blanketed the Dove Mountain desert course Wednesday. It took almost five hours to clear the last of the snow on Thursday. That delay meant the final matches were played in near darkness, and they could have stopped after 15 holes. Woods wanted to play on,



Tiger Woods looks down from the 12th tee box at his lie on the fairway in the first round against Charles Howell III during the Match Play Championship golf tournament, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, in Marana, Ariz.

even though Howell had the momentum. Woods was 2 under for the day, and neither of them made a bogey. "We both played well," Woods said. "He made a couple of more birdies than I did. He played well, and he's advancing." McIlroy, the No. 1 player in the world, built a 2-up lead early in the match until

Lowry rallied and grabbed the moment by chipping in for birdie on the par-3 12th and then ripping a fairway metal to within a few feet for a conceded eagle on the 13th. Lowry missed a short par putt on the 14th, only for McIlroy to give away the next hole with a tee shot into the desert and a bunker shot that flew

over the 15th green and into a cactus. But the two-time major champion hung tough, coming up with a clutch birdie on the 16th to stay in the game. McIlroy nearly holed his bunker shot on the 18th, and Lowry followed with a steady shot out to 4 feet and calmly sank the putt. "Deep down, I knew I could beat

him," Lowry said. "There's a reason I'm here, and this is match play." For McIlroy, more questions are sure to follow him to Florida for his road to the Masters. He now has played only 54 holes in the first two months of the season, missing the cut in Abu Dhabi and losing in the first round at Dove Mountain. □

Associated Press



Detroit Tigers third baseman Miguel Cabrera waits to hit in the batting cage during a baseball spring training workout Friday, Feb. 15, 2013, in Lakeland, Fla.
Associated Press

Venezuela brings big hitters to World Baseball Classic

JORGE RUEDA

Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Despite missing some of its best pitchers, Venezuela is heading into the World Baseball Classic with a big-hitting roster that features Triple Crown winner Miguel Cabrera and World Series MVP Pablo Sandoval.

Marco Scutaro, Elvis Andrus and Omar Infante also will be in everyday lineup. Luis Sojo will manage the team from the baseball-crazed South American country.

"The most difficult part was undoubtedly selecting the names that should come with us," coach Carlos Miguel Oropesa said in a statement Thursday.

Venezuela plays the Dominican Republic in its WBC opener on March 7. Puerto Rico and Spain also are in the group that will compete in San Juan.

Venezuelan aces Felix Hernandez of the Seattle Mariners and Johan Santana of the New York Mets — both former Cy Young winners —

are not on the roster. Free agent Carlos Zambrano will be the team's No. 1 pitcher in the third edition of the WBC.

The hitters will be led by Cabrera and Sandoval.

Last year, Cabrera became baseball's first Triple Crown winner in 45 years. The Detroit Tigers star will be joined by Sandoval, the third baseman who played a key role in bringing the San Francisco Giants a World Series trophy last season. □

NHL Capsules

Flyers use late goal to slip past Penguins 6-5

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Jakub Voracek scored the go-ahead goal with 1:31 remaining in the third period to cap a hat trick and lead the Philadelphia Flyers to a wild 6-5 victory over the Pittsburgh Penguins on Wednesday.

Voracek's third goal came 33 seconds after Pittsburgh's Brandon Sutter tied the game on a wrap-around as the Penguins rallied from a pair of two-goal deficits in the third period. Voracek's first goal of the game came on the power play, giving the Flyers a 3-2 lead with 9.9 seconds left in the second period. His second, the 200th point of his NHL career, put Philadelphia ahead by two goals 18 seconds into the third period.

Wayne Simmonds had two goals and an assist and Nicklas Grossman also scored for the Flyers.

Goaltender Ilya Bryzgalov overcame a shaky start for



Philadelphia Flyers right wing Mike Knuble (9) cannot get a wraparound shot past Pittsburgh Penguins goalie Tomas Vokoun (92) and defenseman Matt Niskanen (2) in the first period of an NHL hockey game in Pittsburgh, Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2013.

Associated Press

his eighth victory.

Evgeni Malkin and James Neal scored power-play goals, while Sutter, Tyler Kennedy and Matt Niskanen also scored for the

Penguins.

AVALANCHE 1, BLUES 0, OT DENVER (AP) — David Jones scored at 4:43 of overtime and Semyon Varlamov stopped 33 shots,

leading Colorado over St. Louis in front of a smattering of boisterous fans that braved a winter storm.

Matt Hunwick set up the winning goal by bringing

the puck into the zone and passing it over to Jones, who sent a wrist shot over the left shoulder of Jaroslav Halak. The Avs have won seven straight over the Blues at Pepsi Center. This was Jones' first goal since Jan. 22.

Halak stopped 19 shots in his first appearance since coming off injured reserve earlier this month with a strained groin. He got the start with rookie Jake Allen playing the night before and Brian Elliott struggling.

KINGS 3, FLAMES 1

CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — Trevor Lewis scored the go-ahead goal and Los Angeles swept back-to-back games in Alberta with a victory over Calgary.

Lewis had gone 13 games without a point before picking up two assists Tuesday night in the Kings' 3-1 win over Edmonton.

His game-winning goal on Wednesday came at 15:20 of the first period.

Lewis collected a rebound

Daytona 500

Continued from page 17

"We like to be the lame-duck underdog. That's what we're shooting for," Harvick said.

"If it's meant to be, it's meant to be. We definitely have the car and team to be in contention to do that."

But nobody is quite sure what the 500 will look like with NASCAR's new Gen-6 race car. Sunday's race will go off with a full 43-car field, double the amount of cars that ran in Thursday's qualifying races. There were 19 cars in last Saturday's exhibition.

Kyle Busch, winner of the second qualifying duel Thursday and fourth spot on the grid, believes more cars on the track will create a much more dynamic race than is usual for season openers, when drivers are becoming accustomed to new cars.



Driver Kevin Harvick celebrates in victory lane after winning the first of two 150-mile qualifying races for the NASCAR Daytona 500 auto race at Daytona International Speedway, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

"With more cars out there, we might see it be a little bit different come Sunday," Busch said. "There's going to be twice as many good

cars, twice as many middle of the pack cars, twice as many back of the pack cars. If you can get your car handling, driving, feel-

ing good, you'll be able to be one of the guys that's up front."

Kasey Kahne, who settled for second behind Busch,

said timing will be critical and nobody is sure just yet what move will be needed to win the Daytona 500.

"It's tough because you don't know when you get that push. You don't know when it plays into your time," said Kahne. "You need to be ready at any time to get to the front, to second, to third, try to move up. I don't think waiting till the last lap is a ticket the way things are right now."

And Kahne wasn't ready to give Harvick the win in the big race, either.

"He can be beat, yeah. There's a few of us in the second race who had really good cars, and I could move around really well, similar to what Harvick did in the first race."

In the first race, Harvick held off Greg Biffle over a four-lap sprint to win. Harvick and Biffle also went 1-2 in last Saturday's exhibition race. □

Irvine medals make Irish history at cycling worlds

YURAS KARMANAU
Associated Press

MINSK, Belarus (AP) — Martyn Irvine made history for Ireland by winning its first men's medals at the world track cycling championships in 116 years on Thursday.

Irvine won the silver in the individual pursuit, and within an hour was the champion of the scratch race. He's the first Irishman to medal at the track worlds since Harry Reynolds in 1897.

Irvine finished second to defending champion Michael Hepburn of Australia in the pursuit, then produced a spirited attack over the last 10 laps to claim gold in the scratch race. Irvine powered from Andreas Mueller of Austria to finish first.

"It's unbelievable, I do not know what to say. I'm a world champion," Irvine

said. "It was not easy but once I went it was all or nothing. I didn't look back, it was full gas."

Hepburn won his second gold, a day after helping Australia take the team pursuit.

"It has been just a really very successful championships for me," Hepburn said. "I was pretty confident today."

Irvine finished second to take silver, while Stefan Kueng of Switzerland took bronze over Alexander Morgan of Australia.

In a rematch of last year's Olympics and world finals in the women's team pursuit, the British team of Olympic champions Laura Trott and Dani King and new partner Elinor Barker beat Australia for gold for the third straight time.

"It was really hard. It (race) seemed to flow nicely," Trott said. "We have

changed a few things from the qualification and we did it (victory)."

The British team finished more than a second ahead of Australia. Canada took its second straight championships bronze in the discipline against Poland.

In the first race on the second day of the championships in Minsk Arena, Wai Sze Lee of Hong Kong claimed her first world title in the women's 500-meter time trial. She was the Olympic bronze medallist in keirin.

"I knew I could win today," Lee said. "I hope I will do even better next year because I know that many better riders have not come here."

Miriam Welte of Germany was 0.023 seconds behind to take silver — her second medal in two days. She won the women's team

sprint with Kristina Vogel. Two-time world junior champion Rebecca Angarad James of Britain was third, earning his second bronze of the championships. She was third with Victoria Williams in the team sprint.

In the men's team sprint, the German team of Rene Enders, Stefan Botticher and Maximilian Levy beat New Zealand by 0.049 seconds.

France edged defending champion Australia for bronze. □



Ireland's Martyn Irvine celebrates after winning the track cycling Men's Scratch Race event during the Track Cycling World Championships in Minsk, Belarus, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013.

Associated Press



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Miguel Céspedes Raymond Pozo
NR

Study:

Effects of bullying reach far beyond childhood

CATHERINE SAINT LOUIS
© 2013 New York Times

Victims of bullying at school, and bullies themselves, are more likely to experience psychiatric problems in childhood, studies have shown. Now researchers have found that elevated risk of trouble extends into adulthood, sometimes even a decade after the intimidation has ended.

particularly among youths involved in bullying as both a perpetrator and a victim," she added.

The study followed 1,420 subjects from western North Carolina who were assessed four to six times between ages 9 and 16. Researchers asked both the children and their primary caregivers if they had been bullied or had bullied others in the three months

before each assessment. Participants were divided into four groups: bullies, victims, bullies who also were victims, and children who were not exposed to bullying.

Participants were assessed again in young adulthood – at 19, 21 and between 24 and 26 – using structured diagnostic interviews.

Researchers found that victims of bullying in childhood

were 4.3 times more likely to have an anxiety disorder as adults, compared with those with no history of bullying or being bullied. Bullies who were also victims were particularly troubled: they were 14.5 times more likely to develop panic disorder as adults, compared with those who did not experience bullying, and 4.8 times more likely to experience depression.

Men who were both bullies and victims were 18.5 times more likely to have had suicidal thoughts in adulthood, compared with the participants who had not been bullied or were perpetrators. Their female counterparts were 26.7 times more likely to have developed agoraphobia, compared with children not exposed to bullying. Bullies who were not victims of bullying were 4.1 times more likely to have anti-social personality disorder as adults than those never exposed to bullying in their youth.

The effects persisted even after the researchers accounted for pre-existing psychiatric problems or factors that might have contributed to disorders, like physical or sexual abuse, poverty and family instability.

"We were actually able to

say being a victim of bullying is having an effect a decade later, above and beyond other psychiatric problems in childhood and other adversities," said William E. Copeland, lead author of the study and an associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Duke University Medical Center.

Bullying is not a harmless rite of passage, but inflicts lasting psychiatric damage on a par with certain family dysfunctions, Copeland said.

"The pattern we are seeing is similar to patterns we see when a child is abused or maltreated or treated very harshly within the family setting," he said.

Previous research from Finland, based on questionnaires completed on a single occasion or on military registries, used a sample of 2,540 boys to see if being a bully or a victim at 8 predicted a psychiatric disorder 10 to 15 years later. The researchers found that frequent bullying victims were at particular risk of adverse long-term outcomes, specifically anxiety and anti-social personality disorders. Victims were at greater risk for anxiety disorders, while bullies were at increased risk for anti-social personality disorder. □



A student passes lockers at a high school in Greenwood Village, Colo. Victims of bullying at school, and bullies themselves, are more likely to experience psychiatric problems into adulthood, researchers say.

(Matthew Staver/The New York Times)

The new study, published in the journal JAMA Psychiatry on Wednesday, is the most comprehensive effort to date to establish the long-term consequences of childhood bullying, experts said.

"It documents the elevated risk across a wide range of mental health outcomes and over a long period of time," said Catherine P. Bradshaw, an expert on bullying and a deputy director of the Center for the Prevention of Youth Violence at Johns Hopkins University, who was not involved in the study.

"The experience of bullying in childhood can have profound effects on mental health in adulthood,

Expert: US children eating fewer calories

SABRINA TAVERNISE
© 2013 New York Times

American children consumed fewer calories in 2010 than they did a decade before, a new federal analysis shows. Health experts said the findings offered an encouraging sign that the epidemic of obesity might be easing, but cautioned that the magnitude of the decline was too small to move the needle much.

And while energy intake has not changed considerably for adults in recent years, fewer of their calories are coming from fast food, researchers said. Obesity

rates for adults have plateaued after years of increases. A third of adults are obese.

The results of the research on childhood consumption patterns, the only federal analysis of calorie trends among children in recent years, came as a surprise to researchers.

For boys, calorie consumption declined by about 7 percent to 2,100 calories a day over the period of the analysis, from 1999 through 2010. For girls, it dropped by 4 percent to 1,755 calories a day.

"To reverse the current prevalence of obesity,

these numbers have to be a lot bigger," said Marion Nestle, professor of nutrition, food studies and public health at New York University. "But they are trending in the right direction and that's good news." National obesity rates for children have been flat in recent years, but some cities have reported modest declines. The new evidence of a lower calorie intake for children may also foreshadow a broader national shift, experts said.

"A harbinger of change is a good phrase," said R. Bethene Ervin, a researcher at the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention and one of the authors of the report. "But to see if it's really a real trend we would obviously need more years of data."

A drop in carbohydrate consumption drove the decline, a point of particular interest for those who study childhood obesity. Sugars are carbohydrates, and many argue that those added to food like cereal and soda during processing are at the heart of the childhood obesity epidemic. Ervin said it was not clear whether such added sugars alone were behind the carbohydrate decline. □

Google adds new touch to line of Chrome laptops

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Google is adding a new and more expensive touch to its line of Chrome laptops in an attempt to outshine personal computers running on software made by rivals Microsoft and Apple. The Chromebook Pixel unveiled Thursday includes a nearly 13-inch (33-centimeter) display screen that responds to the touch or swipe of a finger. That duplicates a key feature in Microsoft Corp.'s Windows 8, a dramatic makeover of the world's leading operating system for PCs.

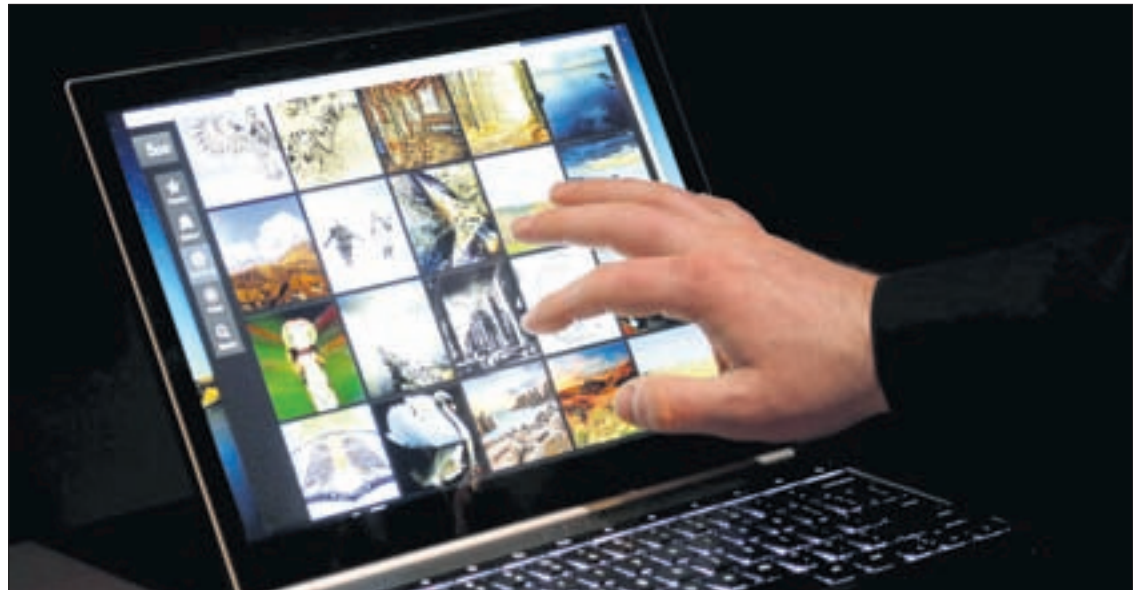
The Pixel's high-resolution screen displays 239 pixels per inch, slightly more than Apple Inc.'s MacBooks with high-resolution Retina displays. A MacBook Pro with a screen that measures 13.1 inches (33.3 centimeters) diagonally can handle 227 pixels per inch (2.5 centimeters), while the 15.4-inch (39.1-centimeter)

model is at 220 pixels per inch.

"This is the future: high-resolution screens and touch," said Sundar Pichai, a senior vice president who oversees Google's Chrome Web browser and operating system.

Google Inc. designed and built the Pixel for "power users" — a fastidious and generally more affluent segment of the PC market willing to pay more for machines equipped with compelling features and components not found in cheaper laptops.

The strategy is a departure for Google, which had positioned Chromebooks based on its Chrome operating system as affordable options for homes and offices looking for a quick and easy way to connect to the Web. Google has been partnering with PC makers to make Chromebooks over the past two years. Among them: Acer Inc. makes a bare-bones



A man uses the Google Chromebook Pixel laptop computer after an announcement in San Francisco, Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013. Google is adding a new touch to its line of Chrome laptops in an attempt to outshine personal computers running on software made by rivals Microsoft and Apple.

Associated Press

Chromebook for just \$199, while Samsung Electronics Co. sells one for \$249.

The Pixel, which Google is building without a partner, will cost \$1,299 for a Wi-Fi only model with 32 gigabytes of flash storage. A 64-gigabyte machine that can connect on both Wi-Fi and a 4G LTE cellular net-

work will cost \$1,499. That's the same price as the cheapest MacBook Pro with a comparable screen, though the Apple laptop comes with 128 gigabytes of storage.

Apple does have a cheaper, lighter laptop, the MacBook Air. A 13-inch (33-centimeter) model with 128 gi-

gabytes of storage starts at \$1,199. It weighs less than 3 pounds (1.35 kilograms) and doesn't have a high-resolution screen. The Pixel has the high-resolution screen and weighs 3.35 pounds (1.52 kilograms). The 13-inch high-resolution MacBook Pro weighs 3.57 pounds. □

Google to sell Internet glasses to contest winners

MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Google is giving more peo-

ple a chance to pay \$1,500

mobile computing. The product, dubbed "Google Glass," will be offered to "bold, creative in-



In this Tuesday, Sept. 25, 2012, file photo, Google co-founder Sergey Brin stands on stage during a bill signing by California Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr., for driverless cars at Google headquarters in Mountain View, Calif.

Associated Press

ple a chance to pay \$1,500 for a pair of the Internet-connected glasses that the company is touting as the next breakthrough in

dividuals" selected as part of a contest announced Wednesday. Participants must live in the U.S. and submit an application of

up to 50 words explaining what they would do with the Google Glass technology. Entries must include the hash tag "ifihadglass" and be submitted through Google Plus or Twitter by next Wednesday. Google did not say how many glasses it will sell this way. Winners will receive the "Explorer" version of Google Glass, a forerunner of the product that is expected to be released to the mass market next year. Google Inc. already sold an unspecified number of the glasses to computer programmers who also paid \$1,500 apiece at a company conference last June.

The people picked to buy this next batch of glasses will be notified in mid- to late March. They will have to travel to New York, Los Angeles or the San Francisco Bay area to pick them up.

Google Glass is supposed to perform many of the same tasks as smartphones,

except the spectacles respond to voice commands instead of fingers touching a display screen. The glasses include a tiny display screen attached to a rim above the right eye and run on Google's Android operating system for mobile devices.

Because no hands are required to operate them, Google Glass is supposed to make it easier for people to take pictures or record video wherever they might be or whatever they might be doing. Online searches also can be more easily conducted by just telling Google Glass to look up a specific piece of information. Google's Android system already has a voice search function on smartphones and tablet computers.

In the latest demonstration of the product's potential, Google posted a video showing people wearing the glasses while skydiving, riding a rollercoaster, skiing, riding a horse and

even swinging on a trapeze. The company, which is based in Mountain View, Calif., also posted photos of the glasses in five different colors: charcoal, tangerine, shale, cotton and sky blue.

To gauge how people might use its glasses, Google is encouraging entrants in its contest to include up to five photos and 15 seconds of video with their applications. □

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US home sales see 2nd-highest pace in 3 years

M. CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. sales of previously occupied homes rose in January to the second-highest level in three years, a sign that the housing market is sustaining its recovery and helping bolster the economy. The National Association of Realtors said Thursday that sales rose 0.4 percent in January compared with December to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.92 million. That was the second-highest sales pace since November 2009, when a temporary home buyer tax credit had boosted sales. The median price for a home sold in January was \$173,600, a 12.3 percent increase from a year ago. Analysts say purchases would be higher if more homes were available. The supply of homes for sale dropped to nearly an eight-year low in January. The 1.74 million previously owned homes for sale at the end of January represented a 4.2-month supply at January's sales pace. That's the lowest supply since April 2008.

Lawrence Yun, chief economist for the Realtors, said sellers normally begin listing homes in February in advance of the spring buying season. But he said this increase might not be enough to alleviate the tight supply. The inventory of homes for sale is 25.3 percent below the level a year ago, when there was a 6.2-month supply of unsold homes. In December, sales declined to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.9 million from 4.96 million in November, according to revised figures released Thursday. The December drop was linked, in part, to the tight supply of homes. For all of 2012, sales rose to 4.66 million, according to revised estimates. That was 9.4 percent more than in 2011 and the most since 2007. But even with the gain, sales were below the 5.5 million that economists associate with a healthy market. □

US consumer prices flat in January for 2nd month

CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. consumer prices were flat in January from December for the second month in a row, the latest sign inflation is in check. That could give the Federal Reserve leeway to continue its efforts to stimulate growth.

The consumer price index has risen 1.6 percent in the 12 months ending in January, the Labor Department said Thursday. That's down from a 2.9 percent pace a year ago.

Excluding the volatile food and energy categories, core prices rose 0.3 percent in January. Core prices have risen 1.9 percent in the past year, below the Fed's inflation target. That's also down from the 2.3 percent pace in the same month a year ago.

The Fed is purchasing \$85 billion in Treasuries and mortgage bonds each month in an effort to keep interest rates low. Last month, some Fed policymakers expressed concern the purchases could even-

tually cause inflation or disrupt bond markets, according to minutes of the Fed's Jan. 29-30 meeting released Wednesday.

But most private economists see little sign that

strategist at brokerage BTIG, said in a note to clients.

Food prices were flat last month after rising for 10 straight months. And energy costs, which include



A woman shops at a Nordstrom store in Chicago. U.S. consumer prices were flat last month, the latest sign inflation is in check. The consumer price index has risen 1.6 percent in the 12 months ending in January, the Labor Department said Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013. That's down from a 2.9 percent pace a year ago.

(AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

prices are increasing at a troubling rate.

"As long as inflation readings remain relatively constrained and inflation expectations do not get out of control, the (Fed) has plenty of runway to continue its program," Dan Greenhaus, chief global

gasoline, dropped 1.7 percent.

The relief at the pump ended in recent weeks, with prices rising steadily this month. Higher gas prices will likely push up measures of inflation in February, though economists expect overall price increases to

stay mild.

Gas prices averaged \$3.78 a gallon (\$1 a liter) nationwide on Thursday, according to AAA. That's up 47 cents from just a month ago.

Some economists said the increase in core prices could continue, causing a slight pickup in inflation. Core prices rose by the most in 20 months. They increased largely because of big jumps in the cost of clothing, hotel costs, and air fares. The gains in clothing and hotel costs were the most in about 18 months.

But increases at that magnitude are unlikely to be repeated, said Paul Ashworth, an economist at Capital Economics.

"At a time when the Fed is becoming more concerned about the costs of its unconventional monetary policies, it is striking that the inflation outlook remains benign," Ashworth said. If the Fed feared that prices were rising too fast, it might have to raise interest rates. □

Wal-Mart's 4Q profit up 8.6%; outlook cautious

A. D'INNOCENZIO

AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Wal-Mart Stores Inc. offered a weak business outlook Thursday as new economic challenges for its low-income U.S. shoppers start to take a toll.

The world's largest retailer reported an 8.6 percent increase in profit for the fourth quarter, which includes the crucial holiday season. But higher gasoline prices, late tax refunds and the payroll tax increase in the U.S. have it wary about the coming year.

The U.S.-based Wal-Mart is considered an economic bellwether because the retailer accounts for nearly 10 percent of nonautomotive retail spending in the U.S. Low- and lower-middle-income people have continued to struggle, even as the housing and stock markets improve.

"We know there are challenges ahead, but we believe our strong financial position ... will continue to

produce strong sales and returns for our shareholders," Chief Financial Officer Charles Holley said in statement. Investors were bracing for a subdued report after a Bloomberg report

"slower than planned" but noted that it was largely due to the delay in tax refund checks. For the current quarter, Wal-Mart expects revenue at stores open at least a year at its

increase analysts polled by Thomson Reuters expected. Overall, revenue at stores open at least a year rose a modest 1.2 percent, including a 2.3 percent gain at Sam's Clubs. Analysts had expected a 1.8 percent increase. Internationally, Wal-Mart is facing continued challenges and is focusing on increasing profitability in countries like Brazil and China. The company said the United Kingdom was particularly tough.

The company is still grappling with bribery charges related to its operations in Mexico that surfaced last April. The allegations are that it failed to notify law enforcement that company officials authorized millions of dollars in bribes in Mexico to speed up getting building permits and gain other favors.

The company has launched its own investigation and is working with government officials in the U.S. and Mexico. □



Shoppers at the Walmart Supercenter store in Rosemead, Calif. Wal-Mart Stores Inc. offered a weak business outlook Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, as new economic challenges for its low-income U.S. shoppers start to take a toll.

(AP Photo/D. Dovarganes)

last week on an email from a top executive characterizing the first two weeks of February as "a total disaster." Wal-Mart acknowledged in Thursday's report that February started

U.S. namesake business to be flat with last year. That represents a slowdown from the 1 percent increase in the fourth quarter. The fourth-quarter gain is below the 1.5 percent

US stocks keep sliding on weak data, Fed qualms

DANIEL WAGNER
AP Business Writer

U.S. stocks continued a two-day slide Thursday on weak economic data and concern about the Federal Reserve's resolve to keep juicing the economy.

Signaling that the U.S. labor market remains in slow recovery mode, the government said more people applied for unemployment benefits last week. The four-week average, a less volatile measure, rose to the highest in six weeks.

The Dow Jones industrial average closed down 46.92 points, or 0.3 percent, at 13,880.62.

The S&P 500 index dropped 9.53, or 0.6 percent, to 1,502.42. The S&P is headed for its first weekly loss of the year. The Nasdaq composite index lost 32.92, or 1 percent, to 3,131.49.

In Europe, markets closed sharply lower after a monthly survey of Europe-

an executives showed that business activity in the European Union slowed in February, a strong signal that a

U.S. indexes have soared this year to the highest levels since the financial crisis but may be ready to fall

ten ahead of itself," she said. She said fourth-quarter earnings have generally met expectations, but only after those expectations were reduced because companies made dire projections in November and December.

Wal-Mart Stores rose after beating analysts' profit forecasts in the fourth quarter. After a strong start to the holiday season, Wal-Mart said, the first three weeks of December were weak, and business has been volatile since then. The company attributed some of the weakness to a delay in tax refund checks that have left people strapped for cash. Wal-Mart's customers also have less money to spend because a temporary payroll tax cut expired in December.

"Everybody's gotten a 2 percent pay cut, and people who file their taxes early

are not getting a refund back in a timely manner," Forrest said. Supermarket chain Safeway was the biggest gainer in the S&P 500, rising \$2.84, or 14.1 percent, to \$22.97 after saying its net income jumped 13 percent in the fourth quarter, helped by higher gift and prepaid card revenue. Electric car company Tesla Motors plunged a day after reporting that its fourth-quarter net loss grew 10 percent on costs related to production of its new Model S. The stock fell \$3.38, or 8.8 percent, to \$35.16.

Earlier, Asian stocks had closed sharply lower. The sell-off began Wednesday afternoon in New York after the release of minutes from the Fed's latest meeting. The meeting notes showed that some policymakers want to wind down bond purchases and other measures aimed at boosting the economy. □



Maureen Smaldone, a trader for Brendan E. Cryan and Company, monitors trading activity from her workstation at the New York Stock Exchange. U.S. stocks are continuing a two-day slide on weak economic data on Thursday, Feb. 21, 2013, and concern that the Federal Reserve may cut back its bond-buying program.

(AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews)

downturn that began last year will continue into 2013. Benchmark indexes lost 2.3 percent in France, 1.9 percent in Germany, and 1.6 percent in Britain.

back to earth, said Kim Caughey Forrest, senior analyst with Fort Pitt Capital Group, a portfolio management firm in Pittsburgh. "I think the market has got-

2012 US wine exports set revenue record: \$1.43B

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — New figures show U.S. wine exports grew for the third consecutive year in 2012, setting a record of \$1.43 billion in revenue, the San Francisco-based Wine Institute said Thursday.

Ninety percent of those exports were from California. Volume shipments reached 424.6 million liters or 112.2 million cases.

The European Union re-

mained the top market for California wines, accounting for about 34 percent of all sales. The state's wineries also saw significant growth in Canada and Asia.

Sales in China reached \$74 million in 2012, up 18 percent from the previous year.

South Korea, at \$16 million, was up 26 percent. And Vietnam, at \$27 million, was up 22 percent.

Exports to Mexico also grew for a second consecutive year, to \$20 million, an amount that was double the 2009 figure.

In Canada, the second largest market for California wines, sales reached \$434 million, up 14 percent. The increase came despite a highly competitive global market, significant trade barriers and a recovering

economy, according to institute president Robert P. Koch.

The institute, which serves as the administrator of an export promotion program managed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, promotes California wines through a video campaign, website and social media campaigns across the globe.

California winemakers say

they've seen increased demand from overseas but still face some barriers to exporting wine.

"We've seen a big demand," said David Gates, vice president of vineyard operations at Ridge Vineyards in Cupertino.

"And as demand has picked up, we pushed a little harder into the more developing markets, the biggest one being China." □

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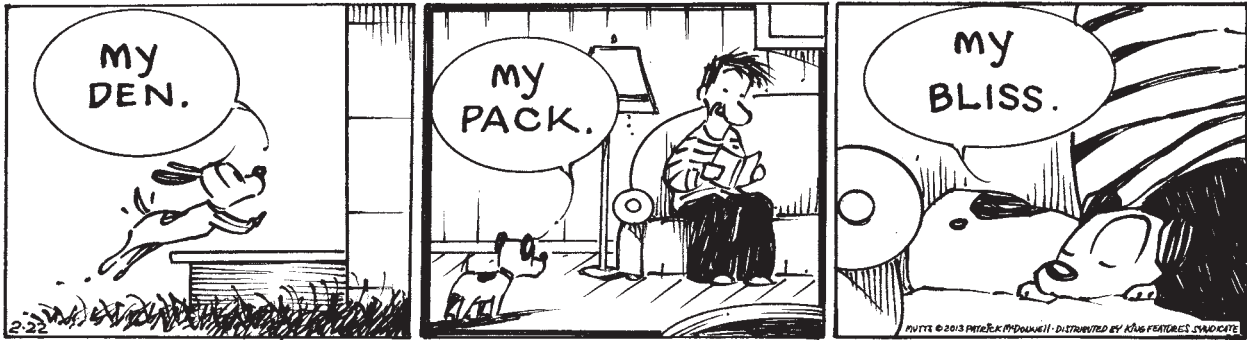
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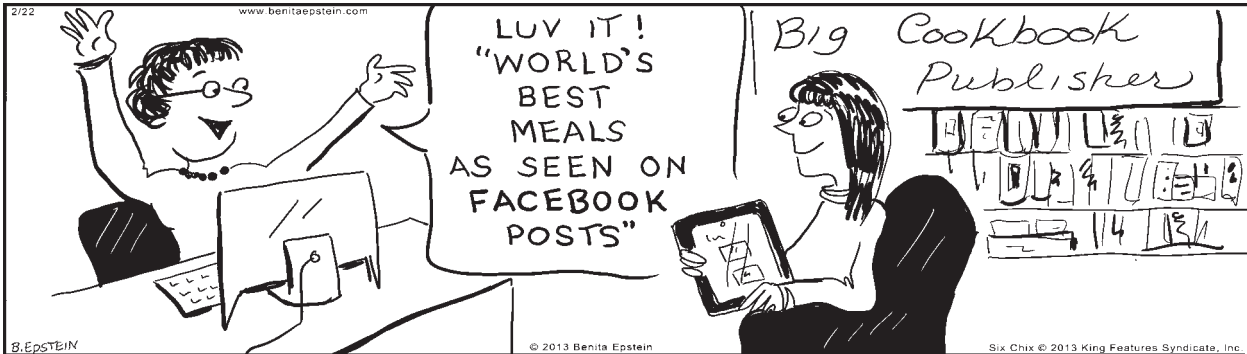


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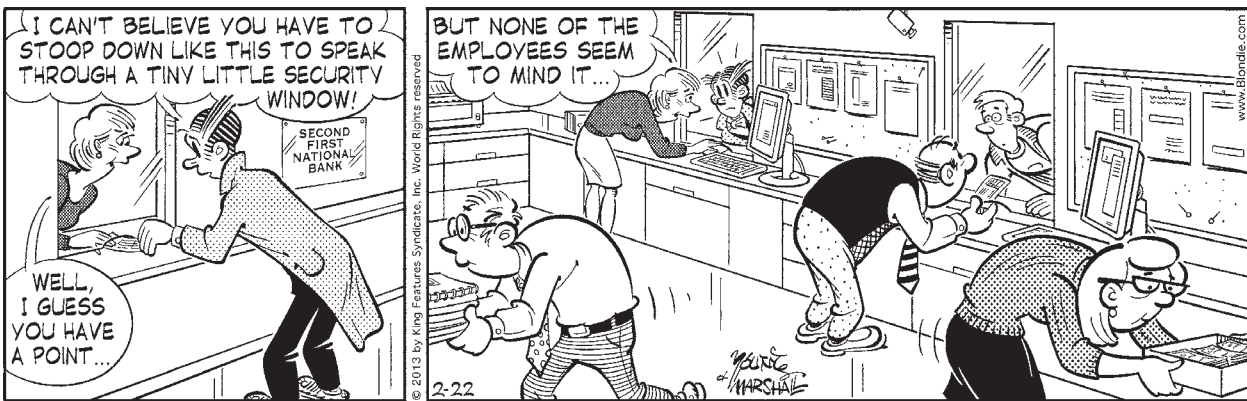
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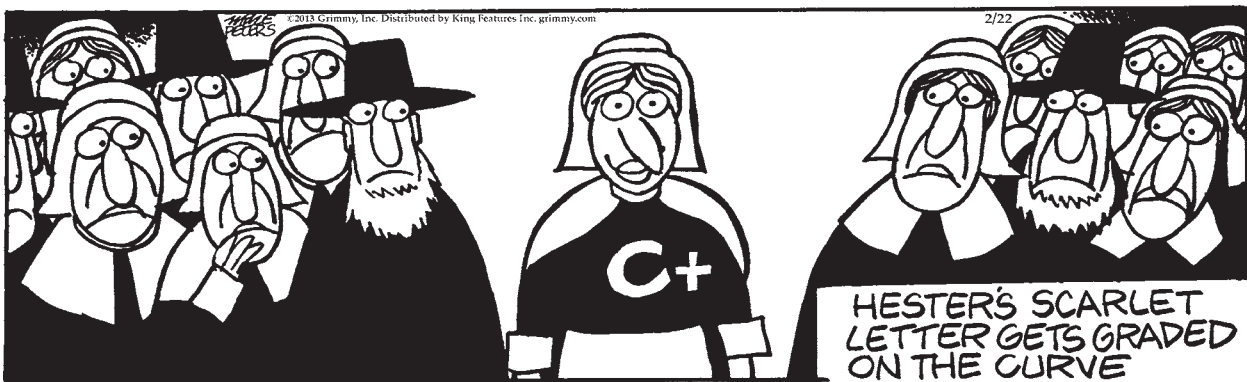
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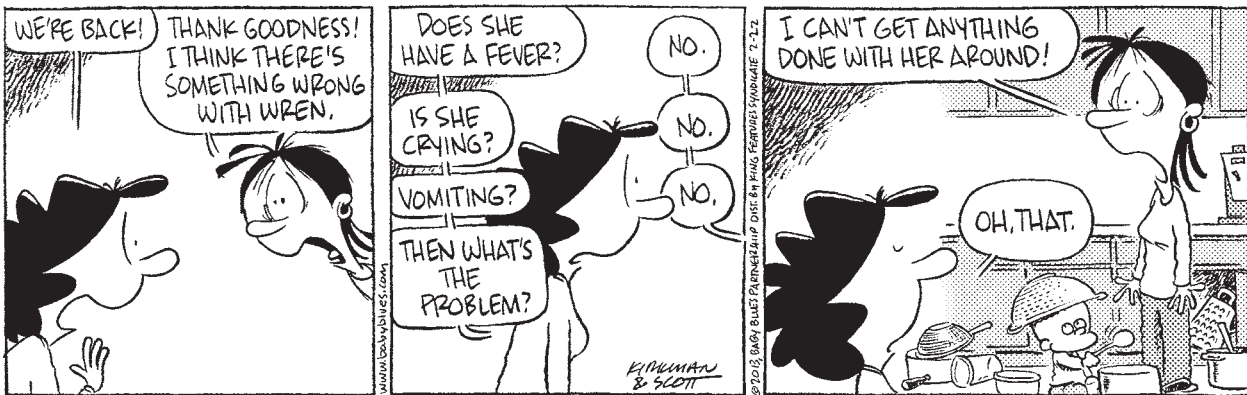
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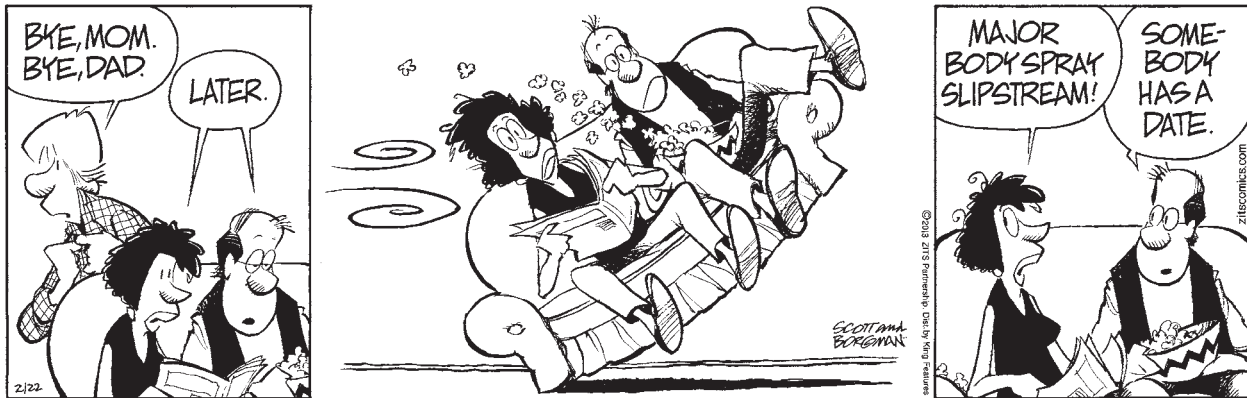
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Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

				2				
		3	8			7		
	6		4			1	5	
	5	1						
2				1				6
						3	4	
	4	2			3		8	
		6			7	4		
				5				

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

2/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	1	9	6	3	2	7	8	5
6	3	5	7	8	1	9	4	2
8	2	7	4	9	5	3	6	1
5	9	1	8	2	4	6	3	7
3	4	2	1	7	6	5	9	8
7	8	6	3	5	9	1	2	4
1	6	8	5	4	3	2	7	9
9	5	4	2	6	7	8	1	3
2	7	3	9	1	8	4	5	6

ACROSS

- Mountains of South America
- Former title for an Iranian ruler
- Compact __; CD
- Throw water on
- Comic actress Imogene __
- Turn __; become
- Birdbrain
- Eras
- Murdered
- Athletic shoes
- Arm covering
- Stack
- Like a school uniform skirt, often
- Go skyward
- Zones
- "__! Humbug!"
- Waterbirds
- Demise
- Corrupt
- Gathered leaves
- Beget offspring
- Jeans fabric
- Trait
- transmitters
- Torné or Tillis
- __ goal; 3-point
- Unfairly slanted
- Huge
- One-dish meal
- Actor & singer Robert __
- Soldiers' eating area
- Old stringed instrument
- Bewildered
- Leg bone
- Individuals
- Like a skyscraper
- Narrow street
- Likelihood
- Finishes
- Canary food bits

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15				16			
17					18				19			
20					21			22	23			
24							25					
26	27	28				29						
30				31	32			33	34	35	36	
37			38		39			40	41			
42				43		44			45		46	
47					48			49	50			
51	52	53					54					
55						56				57	58	59
60					61	62			63			
64					65				66			
67					68				69			

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/22/13

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

LESS	JACKS	PLAN
OV	AWAIT	RAGE
RENO	MENSA	ONES
DRESSED	MILDEST	
HAS	CEDED	
CAREY	SAT	VEGAN
LIED	PER	REDUCE
ASH	ALCOHOL	ARE
CLAMMY	TUB	FRED
KEBAB	DIE	SUDSY
TEPID	HUM	
MANURES	GAMBLER	
USER	EMBER	LIMA
TIRE	PARTS	EMMY
TADS	SLASH	SEAS

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2/22/13

DOWN

- Finds a total

- Part of speech
- Sand ridge
- Get away
- Searching for
- Frighten
- Swine
- Top card
- Red tape
- Sicknesses
- Creek
- Martin or Jobs
- Intimidated
- Firstborn of two
- Go first
- Primp
- Not up yet
- Rescue
- Goatee's spot
- Inquired
- Bird of prey
- Goals
- Redwood or dogwood
- __ on to; kept
- Inert; not moving
- Amounts owed
- Excavate for ore

- Afternoon naps
- Manor and its surroundings
- For __; temporarily
- House of snow
- Heap
- Silenced, as the television

- Makes airtight
- Blend; merge
- Competent
- Committed perjury
- __ to rest; buries
- __ Francisco, Calif.

Oceana Study: What's in a name? Fish consumed often mislabeled

KIRK JOHNSON

© 2013 New York Times

SEATTLE – Many Europeans are fretting these days over horse meat. But over here, it's all about the red snapper.

That seafood delight glistening on the ice at the market or sizzling at the restaurant table? It might not be at all what you think, according to a study of fish bought and genetically tested in 12 parts of the country – in restaurants, markets and sushi bars – by a nonprofit ocean protection group, Oceana.

In the 120 samples labeled red snapper and bought for testing nationwide, for example, 28 different species of fish were found, including 17 that were not even in the snapper family, according to the study, which was released Thursday.

The study also contained surprises about where consumers were most likely to be misled – sushi bars topped the list in every city studied – while grocery stores were most likely to be selling fish honestly. Restaurants ranked in the middle.

Part of the problem, said the study's chief author, Kimberly Warner, is that there are a lot of fish in the sea, and many of them look alike. Overall, the study found that about one-third of the 1,215 fish samples bought, from 2010 to 2012, were mislabeled.



A fisherman displays a fish called "slimehead," also referred to more palatably as an "orange roughy," a distinction allowed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

(Handout Photo)

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A case of wine in a protective steel cage sits on a dock in Charleston, S.C., on Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2013. Mira Winery of St. Helena, Calif., submerged four cases of wine in Charleston Harbor on Wednesday to see what effect the ocean has on aging the wine. Similar experiments with ocean aging have been conducted in Europe.

Associated Press

Winery experiments with aging wine in ocean off U.S.

BRUCE SMITH
Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP)

— An experiment in the age-old art of winemaking began on Wednesday as a California winery submerged four cases of Cabernet Sauvignon in Charleston Harbor to see how the ocean affects the aging of the wine.

Mira Winery of St. Helena, Calif., placed the bottles of wine in yellow steel mesh cages and then submerged them offshore in an undisclosed location. In three months, the wine will be removed and subjected to chemical tests and tasting by experts to see what differences it has from wine aged on land. The winery could produce and sell underwater-aged wine in the future if the trial goes well.

While wineries in Europe have experimented in recent years with ocean aging of wine, the idea is

novel in the United States, said Jim "Bear" Dyke Jr., the Charleston resident who owns the Napa Valley winery.

At least a handful of European wineries have produced underwater-aged wine, some of which has been sold in the U.S.

Winemakers have long known wine recovered from sunken ships has a unique taste and the ocean is thought to have something to do with that. Dyke and his colleagues expect the water pressure, temperature and gentle swaying from currents to produce unique effects. He would not specify the depth of the water in which the wine will be submerged.

"This is a very exciting thing for me as a winemaker," said Gustavo Gonzalez, Mira's winemaker. "When you make wine it's pretty much the same thing for everybody." □

Smallest planet yet found outside our solar system



This image provided by NASA shows an artist rendering of the newfound planet known as Kepler-37b. The planet is about the size of our moon and is the smallest known exoplanet, according to a study published in Thursday Feb. 21, 2013 issue of the journal Nature.

Associated Press

ALICIA CHANG
AP Science Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP)

Astronomers searching for planets outside our solar system have discovered the tiniest one yet — one that's about the size of our moon. But hunters for life in the universe will need to poke elsewhere. The new world orbits too close to its sun-like star and is too sizzling to support life. Its surface temperature is an estimated 700 degrees Fahrenheit (371 degrees Celsius). It also lacks an atmosphere and water on its rocky surface. University of California, Berkeley astronomer Geoff Marcy, one of the founding fathers of the planet-hunting field, called the latest find "absolutely mind-boggling."

"This new discovery raises the specter that the universe is jam-packed, like jelly beans in a jar, with planets even smaller than Earth," said Marcy, who

had no role in the new research.

It's been nearly two decades since the first planet was found outside our solar system. Since then, there's been an explosion of discoveries, accelerated by NASA's Kepler telescope launched in 2009 to search for a twin Earth. So far, 861 planets have been spotted and only recently have scientists been able to detect planets that are similar in size to Earth or smaller.

While scientists have theorized the existence of a celestial body that's smaller than Mercury — the baby of the solar system since Pluto's downgrade — they have not spotted one until now. Nearest to the sun, Mercury is about two-fifths the Earth's diameter; the newly discovered planet and our moon are about a third the size of Earth.

The teeny planet was detected by Kepler, which simultaneously tracks more

than 150,000 stars for slight dips in brightness — a sign of a planet passing in front of the star. The planet — known as Kepler-37b — orbits a star 210 light years away in the constellation Lyra. It's one of three known planets in that solar system.

Discoverer Thomas Barclay of the NASA Ames Research Center in Northern California was so excited when he spied the moon-sized planet that for days, he said he recited the "Star Wars" movie line: "That's no moon." It took more than a year and an international team to confirm that it was a bona fide planet.

The discovery is detailed in Thursday's issue of the journal Nature.

Scientists are looking for an Earth-size planet that's in the so-called Goldilocks zone — that sweet spot that's not too hot and not too cold where water, which is essential for life, could exist on the surface. While the newly discovered planet isn't it, "that does not detract from the fact that this is yet another mile marker along the way to habitable Earth-like planets," said Alan Boss of the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington, who was not part of the discovery team. □

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This undated image released by Boneau/Bryan-Brown shows Helen Mirren as Queen Elizabeth II in a promotional photo for Peter Morgan's play "The Audience."

Associated Press

Helen Mirren's 'The Audience' to be broadcast

MARK KENNEDY
AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Can't get to London to see Helen Mirren play Queen Elizabeth II on stage? No problem — Mirren will come to you. National Theatre Live said Thursday it will broadcast a live performance of the West End world premiere of Peter Morgan's play "The Audience" on June 13. The broadcast from the Gielgud Theatre in London to movie theaters will have

varying dates internationally and encore screenings throughout the summer. Tickets go on sale March 1. The play, directed by Stephen Daldry, imagines a series of pivotal meetings between the queen and various prime ministers in their weekly meetings. Mirren reprises the role of Queen Elizabeth II, for which she won the 2006 best actress Academy Award in "The Queen," also scripted by Morgan. □

Lady Gaga says she's had hip surgery

NEW YORK (AP) — Lady Gaga says she's had surgery on her hip. The 26-year-old singer posted on her blog late Wednesday that she had hip surgery and it "happened so fast." She canceled her "Born This Way Ball" tour last week. Lady Gaga, whose real name is Stefani Germanotta, said that as she was wheeled to surgery, she reflected on her fans. She wrote: "Sometimes you are so brave that it terrifies me. I wonder how it's even possible."

Lady Gaga canceled more than 20 dates on the remainder of her tour, which began last April. She originally postponed four



dates last week after experiencing difficulties during her concert in Montreal. She explained to fans on Twitter that she'd hurt herself while performing some time ago. □

'The Power of Few' makes limited-release debut



This film image released by Steelyard Pictures shows Anthony Anderson in a scene from "The Power of Few," an independent action-drama filmed in New Orleans.

Associated Press

STACEY PLAISANCE
Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Comedian and actor Anthony Anderson sheds his funnyman persona to play a gun-wielding thug in "The Power of Few," an independent action-drama making its limited-release debut Friday. Anderson, star of the NBC sitcom "Guys With Kids," told The Associated Press the main reason he took the part was its departure from the comedic roles for which he's known. But there was another draw: It meant a return to New Orleans, where Anderson lived for a short while after Hurricane Katrina when working on the Fox detective drama "K-Ville," a post-Katrina series set in New Orleans that aired in 2007 and 2008. "Any chance I have to get back to New Orleans, I jump at it," Anderson said. "I found a love for the city and a love and affinity for the people there." Anderson is part of the film's eclectic cast, which also includes Christopher Walken, Christian Slater,

Jesse Bradford and New Orleans native rapper Juvenile.

"My character is a man of the streets," Anderson said. "There's a code in the streets that you don't snitch. Someone was testifying against a friend, and my character wants to send him a message so that he doesn't testify."

The story line is one of several unfolding at the same time. Other story lines include a teenage boy desperate to get medicine he can't afford for his infant sibling; a woman on a mission to deliver a mysterious package to an even more mysterious recipient; and two detectives resorting to torture to solve a crime.

"It's really about karma and choices and consequences," Anderson said. "It's about how every choice we make has consequences, good, bad or indifferent."

The film is part mystery, with a dose of religious conspiracy surrounding the Shroud of Turin — a centuries-old linen cloth that bears the image of a crucified man that millions believe to be

Jesus of Nazareth.

Walken's character, an insightful homeless man named Doke, delivers a monologue referencing the shroud during a pivotal moment in the film. It was a performance Walken said was "challenging" but one he wanted to get right.

Walken said filming gave him his first chance to visit New Orleans.

He said that during breaks in shooting, he took walks in the French Quarter and watched cargo ships and paddlewheel boats maneuver the winding Mississippi River outside his hotel window.

"I hoped that I could be good in it," he said. "If you're an actor, you take parts as they come to you. When you read the script, you ask yourself, can I be good at it, and sometimes you're right, sometimes you're wrong."

"The Power of Few," a Steelyard Pictures production, opens in select theaters in Los Angeles, New Orleans and Baton Rouge, La., on Friday and is expected to open in other markets in coming weeks. □



This March 14, 2012 file photo shows former Spice Girls band member Melanie Brown at "The Hunger Games" film premiere at the O2 arena in London.

Associated Press

Ex-Spice Girl Brown named new 'Talent' judge

NEW YORK (AP) — NBC says former Spice Girl Melanie Brown is joining the judges' panel of "America's Got Talent."

Brown, also known as Scary Spice during her time with the 1990s pop group, will take her seat alongside Howie Mandel and Howard Stern when the variety competition show returns for its eighth season this summer on NBC.

Brown was previously a contestant on ABC's "Dancing with the Stars."

In 2010, she starred with her family in a reality series for The Style Network.

She recently completed a two-season run as judge on the Australian edition of "The X Factor" and for one season was co-host of the Australian "Dancing With the Stars." □

Diane Lane, Josh Brolin divorcing after 8 years

NEW YORK (AP) — Diane Lane and Josh Brolin are divorcing after eight years of marriage.

A representative for the couple confirmed the split Thursday. Brolin and Lane were married in 2004 in the second marriage for both. They don't have any children together.

Lane was previously married to Christopher Lambert. They divorced in 1994 and have a 19-year-old daughter. Brolin was previously married to Alice Adair. They also divorced in 1994 and have two children: an 18-year-old daughter and a 24-year-old son.

The separation was first reported by Us Weekly. Lane received an Oscar nomination for her perfor-



This Jan. 15, 2012 file photo shows actors Josh Brolin, left, and Diane Lane at the 69th Annual Golden Globe Awards in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

mance in the 2002 film "Unfaithful" and co-stars in the upcoming Superman film "Man of Steel."

Brolin was Oscar-nominated for his performance in 2008's "Milk" and starred in the recently released "Gangster Squad." □

Ben Foster replaces Shia LaBeouf on Broadway



This Jan. 18, 2013 file photo shows actor Ben Foster poses at the premiere of "Kill Your Darlings" during the 2013 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

Associated Press

MARK KENNEDY

AP Drama Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Shia LaBeouf is out. Ben Foster is in.

A day after LaBeouf stepped away from the play that would have marked his Broadway debut, he was replaced by Foster.

LaBeouf responded to the backstage turmoil by posting private messages from the show's actors and creative team sent to him that expressed sadness for any creative disagreements and high admiration for LaBeouf's skills.

Foster, whose film roles include "3:10 to Yuma" and "The Messenger" and who was on TV in "The Laramie Project" and "Six Feet Under," had auditioned for the revival of Lyle Kessler's play "Orphans" but had lost the role to the star of the "Transformers" franchise.

After LaBeouf left the production on Wednesday due to what were described as "creative differences," Foster was picked. After the change was announced, LaBeouf tweeted: "Ben Foster is a beast.

He will kill it," in all capital letters. Foster will be making his Broadway debut.

The play, which premiered in 1983, tells the story of two orphaned brothers living in a decrepit Philadelphia row house who decide to kidnap a wealthy man. LaBeouf was to play one brother and Tom Sturridge the other; Former "30 Rock" star Alec Baldwin will be the target.

The switch in actors hasn't delayed the show. Producers said "Orphans" will still open on March 19 at the Schoenfeld Theatre. Rehearsals restart Friday.

LaBeouf apparently stepped away from the play without burning too many bridges — at least according to the messages he's posted on Twitter. The actor published email messages between him, Baldwin, Sturridge and director Daniel Sullivan that indicated a somewhat amicable, if anguished, split.

"Sorry for my part of a disagreeable situation," he wrote to Baldwin in an email posted on LaBeouf's Twitter feed. LaBeouf also posted his raw audition video, allowing the world to

weigh in on his approach. Baldwin apparently wrote to the younger actor: "I don't have an unkind word to say about you. You have my word."

LaBeouf also posted an image of an email he got from former co-star Sturridge, who seemed shocked by the split and called it an honor to work with LaBeouf. "I was stunned by the work you were doing," he wrote. "I think you lifted the play to a place higher than maybe it even deserved to be."

As for Sullivan, the director apparently wrote to LaBeouf after the decision was made that the actor leave the show: "This one will haunt me. You tried to warn me. You said you were a different breed. I didn't get it."

A press representative for the show said the messages were legitimate.

LaBeouf seemed still somewhat shaken by the whole experience Thursday, writing on Twitter a series of slogans with opaque meanings.

"The theater belongs not to the great but to the brash. acting is not for gentlemen, or bureaucratic-academics. what they do is antiart," he wrote in one tweet.

He also posted an image of a commiserative email apparently from Rick Sordelet, a veteran fight director, who said, "It was obvious you were going to turn in a fantastic performance." In the same message, Sordelet wrote: "It must have been difficult for others in the room to be schooled by someone who's raw talent and enthusiasm out matched theirs." It was likely a note not intended for the rest of the company to see.

LaBeouf, whose other films include "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" and "Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps," was also recently seen in John Hillcoat's crime drama "Lawless." □

GOP's Nasty Newcomer



FRANK BRUNI

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When a Vesuvius like John McCain tells you that you belch too much smoke and spew too much fire, you know you've got a problem.

And Ted Cruz, a Republican freshman in the Senate who has been front and center in his party's effort to squash Chuck Hagel's nomination as secretary of defense, has a problem. He's an ornery, swaggering piece of work. Just six weeks since his arrival on Capitol Hill, he's already known for his naysaying, his nit-picking and his itch to upbraid lawmakers who are vastly senior to him, who have sacrificed more than he has and who deserve a measure of respect, or at least an iota of courtesy. Courtesy isn't Cruz's metier. Grandstanding and browbeating are.

He sits on the Senate Armed Services Committee, and during its final meeting on Tuesday about Hagel's nomination, he made such nefarious and hectoring insinuations about Hagel's possible corruption by foreign influences that McCain, who'd gleefully raked Hagel over the coals himself, more or less told Cruz to cool it. It was an unforgettable moment, and one that Republicans shouldn't soon forget, because Cruz, 42, isn't simply the latest overeager beaver to start gnawing his way through the halls of Congress. He's a prime illustration of what plagues the Republican Party and holds it back.

A fascinating illustration, too. On the surface, he should be part of the solution: young, Latino, with a hardscrabble family story including his father's imprisonment in Cuba and escape to the United States. But Republicans who look to him and see any kind of savior overlook much of what drags the party down, which isn't merely or even principally the genealogy of their candidates. It's the intransigent social conservatism, the whiff of meanness and the showy eruptions. It's what Cruz, who rode a wave of Tea Party ardor to victory in Texas in November, distills.

I don't say that to celebrate the Republicans' struggles. Just as the country benefits from a balance of powers between branches of government, it's best served by two viable parties in healthy tension, each checking any capacity in the other for ideological indulgence and excess. And right now the Republican Party accommodates too much quackery, belligerence and misplaced moralism to play a fully credible part in a vital, es-

sential debate about the size and scope of government. The party should be a place where voters who are reasonably concerned about government overreach can turn. It shouldn't be a bastion of regressive social ideas and foul tempers.

One voter tells the pollster that he'd be more kindly disposed toward Republicans if they could "be more pro-science." Cruz has expressed skepticism about climate change, a position perhaps in tune with his hyperconservative base and his state's oil interests but at odds with his apparently keen intellect.

He has an impressive academic resume: an undergraduate degree from Princeton, followed by law school at Harvard. I've talked with his fellow students at Harvard and with his former colleagues from George W. Bush's 2000 presidential campaign. All of them mention how fiercely smart he is.

But the flattery stops there. They remember him as arrogant, sour and self-serving, traits that apply to his brief time in the Senate so far. In questioning Hagel during the nominee's confirmation hearing, he took a surprisingly, audaciously contemptuous tone.

Separately, in front of an audience of conservatives, he smirked dismissively as he griped that Hagel and John Kerry were "less than ardent fans of the U.S. military." Those two men fought in Vietnam, and earned Purple Hearts; Cruz never served in the institution he purports to regard so much more highly than they do.

Only three senators voted against Kerry's confirmation as secretary of state. Cruz was among them. He has an affinity for opposing, a yen for obstructing. He belonged to the minority of 22 senators who voted against the Violence Against Women Act, which passed with 78 votes. He also voted against suspending the debt ceiling for three months and against aid to victims of Hurricane Sandy.

He's been quick to seize spotlights like the one presented by "Meet the Press," and while newly minted senators often keep a relatively low profile, he reportedly holds forth in Senate conferences at great and off-putting length. And he's drawing unusual admonitions from senior Republicans.

"I think he's got unlimited potential," Sen. Lindsey Graham told Politico. "But the one thing I will say to any new senator — you're going to be respected if you can throw a punch but you also have to prove you can do a deal."

Indeed, the challenge for Republicans now — a challenge that, to limited and varying degrees, Rubio and even Eric Cantor are beginning to grasp — is to be seen and to act as a constructive force, as a party that's for things, that wants to be inclusive and that operates with a generosity of spirit, not an overflow of spite. □



End Of A Catholic Moment



ROSS DOUTHAT

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The last time the Chair of St. Peter stood vacant, during Pope John Paul II's funeral in 2005, the Roman Catholic Church enjoyed a wave of unusually favorable coverage from the U.S. press. The Polish pope had a way of disarming even his most stringent critics, and that power extended beyond his death, turning his funeral into a made-for-television spectacle that almost felt like an infomercial for the Catholic faith. Perhaps not coincidentally, the mid-2000s were the last time the Catholic vision of the good society — more egalitarian than American conservatism and more moralistic than American liberalism — enjoyed real influence in U.S. politics. At the time of John Paul's death, the Republican Party's agenda was still stamped by George W. Bush's "compassionate conservatism," which offered a right-of-center approach to Catholic ideas about social justice. The Democratic Party, meanwhile, was looking for ways to woo the "values voters" (many of them Catholic) who had just helped Bush win re-election, and prominent Democrats were calling for a friendlier attitude toward religion and a bigger tent on social issues.

That was a long eight years ago. Since then, the sex abuse scandals that shadowed John Paul's last years have become the defining story of his successor's papacy, and the unexpected

abdication of Benedict XVI has only confirmed the narrative of a church in disarray. His predecessor was buried amid reverent coverage from secular outlets, but the current pope can expect a send-off marked by sourness and shrugs.

The collapse in the church's reputation has coincided with a substantial loss of Catholic influence in U.S. political debates. Whereas eight years ago a Catholic view of economics and culture represented a center that both parties hoped to claim, today's Republicans are more likely to channel Ayn Rand than Thomas Aquinas, and a strident social liberalism holds the whip hand in the Democratic Party.

Indeed, between Mitt Romney's comments about the mooching 47 percent and the White House's cynical decision to energize its base by picking fights over abortion and contraception, both parties spent 2012 effectively running against Catholic ideas about the common good. This transformation suggests that we may have reached the end of a distinctive "Catholic moment" (to repurpose a phrase from the late Catholic priest-intellectual Richard John Neuhaus) in U.S. politics, one that began in the 1980s after John Paul's ascension to the papacy and the migration of many Catholic "Reagan Democrats" into the Republican Party.

This was hardly the first era when Catholic ideas shaped American debates. (New Deal-era liberalism, for instance, owed a major debt to Catholic social thought.) But it was the first era when the Catholic vote was both frequently decisive and genuinely up for grabs, and it was an era when Catholic debates and personalities filled the vacuum left by the decline of the Protestant mainline.

The fact that the Second Vati-

can Council had left the church internally divided limited Catholic influence in some ways but magnified it in others. Because the church's divisions often mirrored the country's, a politician who captured the typical Catholic voter was probably well on his way to victory, and so would-be leaders of both parties had every incentive to frame their positions in Catholic-friendly terms. The church might not always be speaking with one voice, but both left and right tried to borrow its language.

If this era is now passing, and Catholic ideas are becoming more marginal to our politics, it's partly because institutional Christianity is weaker overall than a generation ago, and partly because Catholicism's leaders have done their part, and then some, to hasten that de-Christianization. Any church that presides over a huge cover-up of sex abuse can hardly complain when its worldview is regarded with suspicion. The present pope has too often been scapegoated for the sex abuse crisis, but America's bishops have if anything gotten off too easily, and even now seem insufficiently chastened for their sins.

The recent turn away from Catholic ideas has also been furthered by a political class that never particularly cared for them in the first place. Even in a more unchurched America, a synthesis of social conservatism and more egalitarian-minded economic policies could have a great deal of mass appeal. But our elites seem mostly relieved to stop paying lip service to the Catholic synthesis; professional Republicans are more libertarian than their constituents, professional Democrats are more secular than their party's rank-and-file and professional centrists get their encyclicals from Michael Bloomberg rather than the Vatican. □

'Go local' efforts aim to resolve unpaid wages

LIZETTE ALVAREZ

© 2013 New York Times

MIAMI – Compared with many other states, Florida has not been hospitable to the cause of worker rights. Unemployment benefits are among the lowest in the country. The state was the first to dismantle its Labor Department, and the Republican-dominated state Legislature has been such a staunch defender of business that any pro-worker legislation has little if any chance.

But advocates for worker rights have a new strategy: Go local.

They have persuaded Florida's two most populous counties to pass ordinances making it easier for workers to recover unpaid wages from employers.

The issue – which advocates call "wage theft" – has proved to be potent, putting businesses and lawmakers on the defensive in county-by-county battles throughout Florida. The issue, and the "go local" strategy, is also being pushed nationally.

"There is really a movement afoot," said Kim Bobo, the executive director of Interfaith Worker Justice, which has led the fight. "It's such an easy issue for people to understand, and we have seen such momentum over the last couple of years."

In January, Broward County, which is largely Democratic, became the second in Florida to enact an ordinance to help workers recoup money they had earned but not been paid. The ordinance passed despite strong opposition from business groups, which say it is duplicative and burdensome for businesses.

In 2010, Miami-Dade County was the first in the country to approve the so-called wage theft, or wage recovery, ordinance.

Palm Beach County, another largely liberal enclave, recently agreed to fine-tune a plan to better address unpaid wages, although in a less comprehensive way than in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. And Alachua County,

a Democratic-leaning area in Central Florida, has an ordinance being considered.

Such wage disputes are fast becoming an issue nationally. Several states have put in place greater protections, including New York, New Mexico, Massachusetts and Maryland. And a bipartisan bill is circulating in the Arkansas Legislature.

Cities and counties have

Department collected more than \$859 million in back wages for more than 1 million workers. But most cases go unreported, and worker advocates say that in some cities the practice is endemic. The worst offenders, studies have shown, are the construction and restaurant industries.

In Florida, the high number of immigrant workers complicates the issue. Because

Kristin Jacobs, the mayor of Broward County, who pushed for the wage recovery ordinance.

Likening Florida to the "wild, wild West," she said that South Florida counties were trying to serve their residents, despite the opposition of the legislators, many from the more conservative counties in North Florida.

After a falling-out with her employers, Flor M. Krockel, 46, left her job at a Miami day care center without her last two weeks' wages. A few well-placed phone calls from the county finally persuaded her employer to send along the check.

"They said if you don't pay your former employees, then you might have to go to court," Krockel said. "That's when it clicked."

Now, advocates in Miami-Dade are also pushing for a sick leave measure there.

The Florida Retail Federation opposes the county-led wage recovery and sick leave measures. It and other business groups say they would rather strengthen ex-

isting state law than grapple with a county-by-county approach.

"We don't defend bad employers who are doing this," said John Fleming, the spokesman for the federation. "We think, really, there should be some penalties that crack down on the companies."

A state law enabling the court system to deal with

unpaid wages would be the best solution, Fleming said. At the moment, claims can be heard in federal court or, in some cases, state and local courts, but the process is cumbersome, expensive and lengthy.

Worker advocates say that claims typically fall into a void. The state has no wage and hour labor enforcement division. And while U.S. Labor Department officials have increased enforcement and staff, they are chronically overwhelmed.

"We do agree it would be great to have something statewide, but something that is really going to do something," said Jeanette Smith, who has led the effort to combat wage non-payment here with South Florida Interfaith Worker Justice, a coalition of religious leaders. "It's not a complicated issue. Someone works, you pay them." The recession, in a way, served as the springboard in the push for worker rights. With businesses hit hard, nonpayment of wages – either in unpaid overtime or an outright failure to pay workers for days, if not weeks – grew more pronounced. Workers grew bolder and more willing to work with unions and other groups.

Proponents of wage recovery say forcing employers to pay the correct wages makes business sense: Workers stay in their jobs, ethical businesses can better compete and the state picks up more tax revenue. Ron von Paulus, who owns a tree service company in Miami, is one of the few business owners to publicly support the ordinances. For him, competing with business owners who do not pay the proper wages makes for an uneven playing field.

"What could be wrong about paying a guy to work?" von Paulus asked. "It's probably not the smartest business decision I have ever made. I do stupid things all the time. But I do it because it's the right thing to do." □



Two employees at work for Ron von Paulus, one of the few business owners to publicly support ordinances intended to help workers recover unpaid wages, in Weston, Fla. Worker advocates have persuaded Florida's two most populous counties to pass ordinances making it easier for workers to recover unpaid wages from employers. (Maggie Steber/The New York Times)

pushed similar measures, including Seattle; San Francisco; Grand Rapids, Mich.; and Chicago, which in January passed one allowing the city to suspend or revoke the licenses of businesses that violate Illinois' wage recovery law. The problem of unpaid wages is significant. In 2009, the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Labor

they tend to work in low-paid jobs and may lack English skills, know-how, money and legal status, immigrants are most vulnerable to being underpaid or not paid at all. With the state unwilling to address the problem, local communities say they must. "We are figuring out a way to deal with these issues on our own," said